

# Desolate Era

## (莽荒纪)

### Book 40

### The Five Autarchs

### I Eat Tomatoes

### (我吃西红柿)

#### Story Description:

Fate had never been kind to Ji Ning. Wracked by illnesses and infirm his entire life on Earth, Ning knew early on that he would die as a teenager. What he didn't know was that there really was such a thing as life after death, and that the multiverse was a far larger place than he thought. A lucky twist of fate (one of the few in Ning's life) meant that Ning was reborn into a world of Immortals and monsters, of Ki Refiners and powerful Fiendgods, a world where Dynasties lasted for millions of years. A world which is both greater...and yet also smaller... than he ever could imagine. He would have the opportunity to join them, and in this life, Ning swore to himself, he would never let himself be weak again! The Era he was born into was a Desolate one, but Ning would make it his era.

Original Story can be found here: [Link](#)

# Chapter 1: The Imprisoned Exalt

Spacetime around the Wellspring Sea was in a state of constant flux. It had taken even the Blazesun Ruler a full three years of travel via his warship before he had managed to pass through it. Ji Ning was at a higher level of insight than him, but it had still taken Ning a full five months before passing through the region of dangerous, distorted spacetime.

If you made a mistake when passing through a region of distorted spacetime, you could end up within a spacetime fragment and be forever unable to escape! If you were 'lucky', you might simply be teleported to an incredibly distant place... which might end up being a death trap.

This was why the Blazesun Ruler had felt so certain that he was the only person to discover the Blazesun Wellspring Sea. At first, he didn't even consider the possibility that Ning would be there. It was only after his forces had searched the entire Blazesun Domain to no avail that he had thought of this place and came here to test us luck.

"Head in that direction," Ning ordered as he used his Sword Dao domain to chop a spacetime tunnel open for the realmship to pass through.

"This Wellspring Sea truly was hidden quite well," Hegemon Azurefiend mumbled to himself.

"I often visit the Blazesun Domain, but I've never even heard of this place," Patriarch Treewind said.

They continued to advance through the twisting, changing spacetime continuum. They constantly changed directions as they advanced, and after a full month Ning suddenly called out, "Halt!"

"Master, we haven't left yet," Hegemon Azurefiend said.

"I'm preparing to train here for a period of time," Ning said with a smile. "This is currently the safest place in the entire Blazesun Domain."

"Huh?" Everyone present looked flabbergasted.

"The Wellspring Sea is like a boulder which is sitting within many currents of chaotic spacetime," Ning said. "It doesn't matter which way we

go; we'll still run into those streams. The Blazesun Ruler is at a lower level of insight than me; even if he came back with four other Domain Rulers, he would still just follow the pathways he is already familiar with. There's no way he would search and scan all of the possible routes. At his current level, if he dared to do so he'd probably get lost! My guess is that the reason why he was even able to find the Wellspring Sea was because he had the warship helping him out; otherwise, he would never have been able to find this place."

Ning's guess was correct. The warship was even more tightly attuned to spacetime than ordinary realmships were, and it was primarily thanks to the warship that the Blazesun Ruler had been able to find the Wellspring Sea.

"They won't be able to find me as I train here," Ning said. "Their chances might improve if there are three or four of them, but eventually the other Domain Rulers will have to go back. There's no way they'll stay in the Blazesun Domain the entire time."

Ning partially wanted a quiet place to train, but he also wanted to be cautious. Battling against the likes of the Blazesun Ruler was truly pointless for him. They were merely at the Hegemonic level of insight; their primary advantage lay in the fact that they were truly blessed with incredible gifts. Ning had only been able to destroy 5% of the Blazesun Ruler's truesoul with a full-power strike; a battle against a Domain Ruler would literally be nothing more than Ning pitting his truesoul against the Domain Ruler's in a war of attrition. Ning truly couldn't be bothered to take part in something like this.

"Darknorth speaks the truth. It is best to be cautious," Nuwa agreed.

"Yes, yes. Let's spend some more time here." Su Youji was similarly worried about Ning exhausting too much energy.

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And so, Ning began to train within a small spacetime pocket located within the chaotic spacetime surrounding the Wellspring Sea. Every day, he was able to hear the whooshing, rumbling sound of the Wellspring Sea.

Even Su Youji, who walked the path of the Dao of Fire, began to gain many insights and began to train. Ning himself continued to focus on slowly merging his Dao of Water into his Eternal Omega Sword Dao. After spending a total of 1.2 billion years, he finally completed the process and fully integrated his Dao of Water into his Sword Dao.

“Supremely kind and gentle, and filled with all the secrets of water... I suppose I can call this the Water Sword Dao.” Ning smiled as he opened his eyes. He could sense that his sword-heart was a hair more calm and peaceful than it had been in the past. This was the nature of water; it struggled against nothing and accepted everything. Thanks to the Dao of Water, his soul and truesoul were now significantly calmed and began to disintegrate much more slowly than before.

“I killed the Lonely King and the eight-armed giant, then struck out against the Blazesun Ruler. These actions caused my truesoul to disintegrate more quickly, but integrating the mysteries of the Dao of Water into my Sword Dao caused the process to slow down once again. These things actually ended up cancelling each other out. I still have roughly eight thousand chaos cycles left to me.” Ning laughed, but he knew that there was no way to make up for what he had lost during those three battles.

If he had never fought at all, then the full integration of the Dao of Water would've resulted in his lifespan being extended to ten thousand chaos cycles! It must be remembered that his other Daos, such as the Dao of Lightning, would be of little use to him in preserving his truesoul. Ning had the feeling that the Dao of Water was the most effective in this regard... but alas, its benefits had been cancelled out by the battles he had taken part in.

These battles had an effect akin to creating cracks on a dike. Each battle would cause those cracks to become greater and greater, hastening the day when the dike crumbled apart in its entirety.

Boom! Ning stretched out his right hand, causing a sword to manifest in the palm of his hand. This was an unadorned sword that looked extremely ordinary.

“Eh? This sword...” Nuwa, Patriarch Treewind, Azurefiend, Goodsong, and the others inside the realmship couldn’t help but feel intrigued and enticed by that sword. It looked quite ordinary, but in their hearts they couldn’t help but feel that this sword somehow embodied all the mysteries of the Dao of the Sword.

Ning smiled as he then reached out with his left hand. A second sword appeared within the palm of his left hand, but this one was covered with a layer of flowing watery light that made it seem calmer, more beautiful, and more gentle.

“On one side is the ‘pure’ Eternal Omega Sword Dao,” Ning said with a laugh, “And on the other is the Eternal Omega Sword Dao that has been infused with the mysteries of water. I suppose you can call it the Water Sword Dao. Can you sense the differences between the two?”

“The first seems purer; save for the sword, there is nothing else,” Nuwa said. “I can sense a gentle stream of water coming from the other... but it also feels like a vast, completely calm ocean.”

“Is purity better, or is infusing other mysteries better?” Patriarch Treewind couldn’t help but ask.

Ning nodded in response to the question. “In the early stages of cultivation, purity is better! But when you reach the utmost apex in purity and are unable to advance any further, that’s when you’ll need to broaden your base. Alright, I’ve already completed my task. Given that it has been 1.2 billion years, my guess is that even if the Blazesun Ruler did invite other Domain Rulers to come help him out, they’ve probably left by now after all these years of fruitless waiting. Let’s head out and go towards the place where that Sithe Exalt has been imprisoned.”

“Let’s go!” Flamewing said excitedly. Finally! It had grown bored long ago.

“I’ve never seen a Sithe Exalt either.” Azurefiend was filled with anticipation as well.

“The Sithe Exalts of legend...” Nuwa and Su Youji had never seen one of them either.

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Whoosh! Thanks to Ning's guidance, the realmship spent another three months before finally exiting the region of distorted spacetime and returning to the normal spacetime continuum. Next, Ning's group spent another month riding the realmship before finally reaching the place where the legendary Sithe Exalt was imprisoned.

"The place where the Sithe Exalt has been imprisoned is known as the Earthfire Continent," Patriarch Treewind explained. "Anyone who sees a Sithe Exalt will feel a sense of awe. The feeling they give us is completely different from the feeling which the Blazesun Ruler gives us."

"Completely different?" Ning was startled. "But aren't the Sithe Exalts on par with the Blazesun Ruler in power?"

"You'll understand when you see him," Patriarch Treewind said.

"The Sithe Exalts are rather pitiable creatures," Emperor Jade Rainbow said. He shook his head and sighed. "Everyone who sees them feels sorry for them, but none of us dares to go too close to them. This is because the Sithe Exalts remain as crazed and berserk as ever. If you go too close, you might end up dead."

As they chatted, a vast continent suddenly appeared in the void in front of them. This continent was so gigantic in size, it was impossible for them to see to the ends of it. The realmship flew into the skies above the vast continent, with Patriarch Treewind and Emperor Jade Rainbow guiding them closer and closer to the prison.

Boom! Boom! Boom!!! Even though they were still very far away, Ning was already able to vaguely hear a series of booming sounds. He was also able to see with the naked eye a hint of fiery light flickering from far away.

As the realmship flew closer and closer, the fiery light became increasingly dazzling to behold. It was actually a vast field of fiery light that stretched off to cover an area of ten billion kilometers. It was like a field of divine punishment that was crushing and suppressing a blurry figure at the very center of the field. The blurry figure was seated in the lotus position, its body emanating an aura of tremendous power that was

fighting back against the endless field of fiery light.

“What?!” Ning turned pale. The vast field of fiery light clearly concentrated its power at the center, where an endless series of explosions continued to burst out against the blurry figure. The power of each explosion vastly surpassed the full-strength strikes of the Blazesun Ruler... and the aura emanating from the blurry figure was clearly superior to the Blazesun Ruler’s as well!

“Didn’t they say that the Sithe Exalt was on par with the Blazesun Ruler in power?” Ning immediately felt puzzled by this.

## Chapter 2: Crazy

The realmship continued to fly towards the prison. Ji Ning could see that within the fiery field of ten billion kilometers, there were actually a series of other figures who were either seated in the lotus position or located within small buildings. These cultivators were scattered in the region around the Sithe Exalt, with even the closest maintaining a minimum distance of ten million kilometers.

“Daolord Darknorth,” Patriarch Treewind immediately explained, “The Earthfire Continent is extremely famous. Quite a few cultivators come here to visit, and every so often the imprisoned Sithe Exalt will provide them with some guidance.”

“Guidance?” Ning was surprised. “The Sithe are our mortal enemies. Why would it be so kind-hearted as to provide us with some guidance.”

“Can it perhaps be a trick?” Nuwa guessed.

Imperator Jade Rainbow laughed. “The Sithe Exalt has been imprisoned here for countless years. It is possible that to him, the occasional interaction with cultivators is a form of temporary release. How can there be any ‘tricks’ when pointing out the flaws in their Daos? If they were wrong in their Dao, they were wrong. Quite a few cultivators have already perfected their Daos thanks to this Exalt’s guidance.”

“Oh?” This was the first time that Ning, Su Youji, Nuwa, and many of the others within the realmship had heard such a thing. All of them felt that this really didn’t make much sense.

“Master,” Hegemon Azurefiend said, “There are other cultivators here. I’m afraid that they’ll immediately recognize you once you appear, and then word will probably spread out quite quickly. Is it possible that the Blazesun Ruler would head over here?”

Ning said, “Don’t worry; I wager that the Blazesun Ruler wouldn’t dare to come here on his own! It would take him time to summon four or five of the other Domain Rulers and then make it all the way over to the Earthfire Continent. All I wish to do is visit the Sithe Exalt; half a day will be more

than enough! By the time the Blazesun Ruler arrives, we'll have left long ago."

Whoosh. Watched by many cultivators, the realmship finally descended upon this great continent. This entire region was covered by fiery light, but the pressure wasn't all that great; the centermost region where the Sithe Exalt resided suffered the vast majority of the pressure.

"Which major power has just arrived?"

"He actually descended upon the Earthfire Continent via realmship. It seems an extraordinary figure has just appeared in our midst." The scattered cultivators all stared towards the descending realmship. They watched as a large number of people flew out from within the realmship, with the leader being a white-robed youth who bore a black sheath on his back. Next to him stood the dazzlingly beautiful Su Youji as well as the honest-looking Protector Whitethaw. Nuwa, Hegemon Azurefiend, Hegemon Goodsong, the Flamewing God, Patriarch Treewind, Emperor Jade Rainbow, and the others all appeared next to them as well.

"That's Patriarch Treewind!"

"It's actually Patriarch Treewind and Emperor Jade Rainbow? I heard that they left this place alongside Daolord Darknorth. I even heard that the Blazesun Ruler had gone to Houwu City to hunt them down."

"That white-robed Daolord at their head... his truesoul is slowly crumbling away. That should be the legendary Daolord Darknorth, right?"

"A white-robed youth who bears a black sheath on his back and who failed the Daomerge... Hegemon Goodsong is by his side, as is a dazzlingly beautiful red-robed woman... yes, that has to be Daolord Darknorth."

"That almost certainly has to be Daolord Darknorth."

The formerly-calm cultivators suddenly all grew excited. A violet-robed elder who was an old friend of Patriarch Treewind's actually reached out to him mentally: "Brother Treewind, is that the legendary Daolord Darknorth?"

"It is indeed," Patriarch Treewind said proudly.

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“Respectful greetings to you, Daolord Darknorth,” the violet-robed elder hurriedly rose to his feet and bowed as he said these words.

The other Hegemons and Emperors present emerged as well and all bowed respectfully towards Ning: “Respectful greetings to you, Daolord Darknorth.”

Although Ning wasn’t the type to stand on formal ceremony, all of the cultivators he had encountered recently had spoken to him in this very respectful manner, and so Ning no longer tried to dissuade them. In fact, if he was excessively courteous to them, many of them would actually begin to feel nervous!

“Carry on, gentlemen. I’ve merely come to take a look at the Sithe Exalt,” Ning said.

“Understood,” the cultivators all assented.

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The cultivators had all come out to greet Ning respectfully. Some of the other creatures residing here quickly noticed this behavior. This was an important place where the Sithe Exalt was imprisoned, after all; the Blazesun Ruler had naturally arranged for some of his subordinates to be permanently stationed here and watch over it.

“Daolord Darknorth?” Multiple creatures emerged. Some popped their heads up from beneath the earth while some manifested out of bonfires. All of them stared at the distant white-robed youth in astonishment.

“The Domain Ruler has been searching for Daolord Darknorth this entire time... who would’ve thought that he’d suddenly appear in the Earthfire Continent?”

“Notify the Domain Ruler right away.”

“Hurry up and notify the Domain Ruler!” None of the creatures dared to approach Ning, but since they were responsible for keeping a watch over the trapped Sithe Exalt, they naturally had ways to send information up

the chain of command. They all sent word in almost the same instant.

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As Ning arrived, he didn't just attract interest from the cultivators and the other creatures; he also attracted the attention of the Sithe Exalt.

Boom! Boom! Boom! Explosions continued to blast away at his body. All of the power of the fiery light was concentrated here and continuously hammered away at him. These attacks all seemed quite ferocious, but in truth they were all quite different.

Some were like countless needles that stabbed into his body, piercing into his very soul and truesoul. They caused truly soul-tearing agony! Others were like knives that continuously cut away at his skin; they didn't cause any real injuries at all, but the pain was excruciating! Still others carried illusory effects. In short, all of these attacks served to torment it to the extreme! Although the Sithe Exalt was dressed in gray armor, the exposed parts of his arm, neck, and face were all covered by strange formation-diagrams.

Beneath his feet, there was an enormous formation-diagram that was ten thousand kilometers in size which was identical to the ones covering him. The formation-diagram was imprinted on every part of his body, ensuring that he was perpetually trapped, suppressed, and tormented.

"Ahhhh!" He let out a screeching roar. He had three curved horns growing out of his head, and a pair of azure eyes that stared intently at the distant Ning. "DIE! EVERYONE SHOULD DIE!" He continuously raved, repeating these words over and over again.

He had been trapped here for far too long. He had been imprisoned here since their defeat in the Dawn War. The Autarchs had used their full power to set up this sealing formation-diagram, then established the most tortuous methods available to them to force him to suffer perpetual torment. The suppressive effects of the formation-diagram made it impossible for him to even commit suicide! There was nothing save endless torture, unless he was willing to lower his head and choose a humiliating path...

“Everyone should die...” he mumbled. He had repeated these words far, far too many times.

“All of them are craven and afraid to move too close to me.” He stared off into the distance, his azure eyes filled with malice. He truly did wish to squish these bugs and kill them all! Alas, the little bugs were all quite cautious. After having been sealed away, his attack distance had become limited to a mere million kilometers. After he had successfully killed a few of those ants, the rest had grown cautious and stayed at least ten million kilometers away from him.

“Respectful greetings to you, Daolord Darknorth!” The distant cultivators all bowed towards Ning with tremendous respect.

“Eh?” The Exalt’s attention was drawn to this. It had been a long, long time since he had seen these cultivators treated someone else so respectfully; the last time had been when the Blazesun Ruler had come to this place. Yes, the Autarchs also received this sort of reception when they came, but there was no way any other cultivators would. This was because the cultivators here consisted of Hegemons and Otherverse Lords; it was extremely hard for someone else to convince them to display such respect!

“Daolord Darknorth? Huh? He’s a Daolord of their civilization?” He was puzzled. “Daolords should be weaker than Emperors in their system, right? Why are so many of them being so respectful?”

Although word that Ning had mastered the Eternal Omega Sword Dao had spread like wildfire across the cultivator civilizations, the imprisoned Sithe Exalt had not been informed.

“That feeling he gives me... wait. Something’s wrong. That’s no ordinary Daolord.” He focused his gaze on Ning. “And... he’s failed his Daomerge? In their civilization, the Daolords who fail the Daomerge shall face certain death. This Daolord has failed the Daomerge, but they are all so respectful to him... and he gives me a strange feeling, almost as though he is a match for me...”

Suddenly, his eyes widened as an enormous suspicion swept through his heart like a tidal wave. “Can it... is he... yes. There’s no mistaking it. That’s

the only possibility!”

“A Daolord who can inspire such respect from even Otherverse Lords and who is a match for even myself... there’s only one possibility!” His azure eyes suddenly blazed with incredible luminosity. “Can it be that their civilization has finally given birth to someone who is in control of an Eternal Omega Dao? Thankfully, he’s a Daolord who has failed the Daomerge. He doesn’t have much time left; otherwise, he’d be a major problem.”

“A Daolord who has mastered an Eternal Omega Dao, eh?” The Sithe Exalt quickly came to this conclusion solely based off the scene appearing before him. It was an easy guess to make. The only way a Daolord who failed the Daomerge could be so powerful as to eclipse even Otherverse Lords was if that Daolord was in control of an Eternal Omega Dao. There were no other possibilities!

“Haha... if they’ve given birth to one, they’ll probably give birth to a second, a third, a fourth. Haha... are we finally going to lose? I hope we do. Let’s lose and end it all! Everyone should die. Everyone should die!” he mumbled, his eyes turning even more crazed than before.

# Chapter 3: Exalt Dauber

“The rest of you can stay here. No need to get too close to him,” Ji Ning said. “I’ll go and chat with the Sithe Exalt.”

“Be careful, Daolord,” Patriarch Treewind said hurriedly. “The Sithe Exalt can attack at any moment. Even though he has been imprisoned, he can launch attacks out to a range of one million kilometers.”

The nearby Emperor Jade Rainbow said, “Treewind, not even the Blazesun Ruler is close to being a match for the Daolord, much less this imprisoned Sithe Exalt. However... Daolord, Treewind speaks the truth. It wouldn’t be worth it if you ended up in a fight against this Exalt.”

“Haha, thank you for your advice.” Ning smiled and nodded, then began to walk towards the centermost region of this field of flaming light.

Nuwa, Su Youji, and Azurefiend all watched as he left. Flamewing hesitated for a bit, in the end deciding not to follow. In its heart, it couldn’t help but feel a bit of aversion towards Sithe Exalts.

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This field of flaming light had accumulated all of the fire elemental energy of the surrounding area, concentrating it into a series of terrifying attacks at the center.

“Every single one of these strikes surpasses the maximum power of the Blazesun Ruler... but the Sithe Exalt is able to endure them with ease. No matter how I inspect him, I keep on having the feeling that he should be stronger than the Blazesun Ruler... but everyone in the outside world agrees that the Blazesun Ruler is on par with Sithe Exalts in power.” Ning stared at the Exalt, his heart filled with suspicions. Suddenly, his gaze focused upon the incredibly complicated formation-diagram that covered the area of ten thousand kilometers around the seated Sithe Exalt. That formation-diagram was the center and core of this entire field of flaming light!

The exposed parts of the Sithe Exalt’s skin were also covered by identical

imprints of that formation-diagram.

“Now THAT is a nasty trick!” Ning sucked in a cold breath. “The person who set up this formation-diagram vastly surpasses me in the Dao of Formation.” Ning continued to stare. “And... this formation-diagram includes the Dao of Fire, the Dao of Illusions, the Dao of Darkness, and many other instruments of torture. Many are meant to attack the soul and truesoul. In all the Chaosverse, only the Autarchs could possibly set up a formation-diagram which contains so many Daos.”

Autarchs were at the Daobirth level, where ‘one Dao births many Daos’. Autarch Bolin had reached Autarchy via the Dao of the Claw, and he had also reached Hegemony in all of the other Daos! Formations, illusions... even Daos he had never trained in; he had reached Hegemony in all of them upon gaining Autarchy! Thus, Autarchs were naturally able to employ many different Daos in setting up formation-diagrams. The person who had set up this formation had mixed the various Daos together perfectly. It seemed as though the Autarchs weren’t just the strongest cultivators in the Chaosverse, they were also the most terrifying torturers.

“How much hatred must the Autarchs hold towards them? Why is it that they continue to torment the Sithe Exalts, even after the war has come to an end?” Ning mused to himself, “And this punishment is eternal and unending... wouldn’t just killing them be easier? Why spend so much time and effort in creating these formation-diagrams?”

“Or perhaps... the Autarchs have plans of their own?” Ning mused. As he pondered this question, he continued to draw closer to the Exalt. Eight million kilometers. Five million kilometers. Three million kilometers. Two million kilometers. One million kilometers...

Ning didn’t hesitate at all as he advanced. Although he was now within the range of the Sithe Exalt’s attacks, he didn’t worry at all. Even though he had the feeling that the Sithe Exalt was more powerful than the Blazesun Ruler, Ning had outstripped the Blazesun Ruler in both power and insight into the Dao. He was probably at the Autarch level of power, and if it wasn’t for the fact that his truesoul was continuously crumbling, Ning would’ve dared to actually take an Autarch on in a sparring match.

How could he possibly fear an imprisoned Sithe Exalt?

“Eh?” The Sithe Exalt, seated in the lotus position with his head lowered, finally let out a little snort. The gray armor covering his body seemed rather rusted and old. He raised his head up, the curved horns on his head looking wicked sharp as he glared intently at Ning. A rumbling sound rang out from his throat: “You actually dare to approach me?”

“Why wouldn’t I dare?” Ning continued to walk towards him, only halting when he was roughly a hundred thousand kilometers away. At this distance, the two were able to clearly see each other’s features.

“Hah! You truly are someone who has mastered an Eternal Omega Dao. Haha... I, Dauber, feel admiration towards very few members of your cultivator civilizations. You’ve just joined that list.” The Sithe Exalt stared intently at Ning, his features occasionally twitching from pain but his voice quite calm and steady. “A pity that you failed the Daomerge. Death will be coming for you soon. A true pity. You are the first member of your civilization to master an Eternal Omega Dao, but you are about to die soon.”

“Where there is life, there is death.” Ning smiled. “There’s no reason to fear death, and death is far better than what awaits you. You literally are living a life worse than death.”

“Damn you.” The Sithe Exalt let out a low growl, his eyes flickering with savage light. “Kill me, Daolord. Kill me. I know you have the power to kill me.”

“The Autarchs must have imprisoned you for a reason. Why should I interfere and cause trouble?” Ning shook his head. “Besides... the Sithe are the mortal enemies of us cultivators. I am a Daolord who has failed the Daomerge; if I was to kill you, I’d have to use up my own lifespan. There is no relationship between the two of us which would impel me to make such a sacrifice.”

The Sithe Exalt was intrigued. It seemed as though this terrifying Daolord didn’t know why he had been imprisoned.

“Graaaaaah!” The Sithe Exalt let out a short, ragged growl of pain.

Clearly, he was in a great deal of agony. A short while later, he suppressed the agony and continued to speak: “We Sithe were defeated, true. This was a war of civilizations, a war to the death; either you had to die, or we would die! We lost the war, and I’m willing to accept death as being the result of that. Why must you torment me like this?!”

Ning just listened silently.

“If I, Dauber, had been free and up to my own devices, I never would’ve wanted to launch such a cruel and deadly war. There was no way to avoid this war; if you cultivators remained in power, then we Sithe would’ve perished. That is why I HAD to take part in the war. Both our sides suffered greatly in the war. Why must you feel such hatred for me? Why must you torment me so?”

“Kill me. Grant me release. I’ve had enough of this endless torment.” The Sithe Exalt Dauber stared intently at Ning, his eyes filled with anticipation.

Ning couldn’t help but feel a sudden impulse to charge over and kill the man, releasing him from his torment. However, Ning quickly regained his usual calm.

“He was actually able to affect my thoughts?” Ning glanced at the Sithe Exalt, secretly shocked. From a certain perspective, the Sithe was telling the truth. Even Ning himself felt that wiping out the enemy after winning the war was enough; there was no need to perpetually imprison and torment the survivors. However, the reason why Ning had felt that sudden impulse was primarily because the Sithe Exalt’s voice had managed to bewilder him. This Sithe Exalt had definitely reached a terrifyingly profound level in the art of bewilderment; Ning had a truly perfect sword-heart, but he had still been briefly influenced by the Exalt’s voice, even though he had quickly recovered from it.

A hint of disappointment flickered through the Sithe Exalt’s eyes. He gritted his teeth and said resentfully, “Are you really not going to grant me release?”

“The Autarchs must have imprisoned you for good reason. They are the

leaders of the cultivator civilizations, and they could well have done this because of some secret they know which has a major impact on the war between our two civilizations. There's no way I would intervene," Ning said.

"Damnit. I was so close." The Sithe Exalt Dauber instantly grew even more berserk and growled, "This is unfair. UNFAIR! An Eternal Omega Dao? If I had also embarked upon the path of the Omega Dao long ago, then regardless of whether I succeeded or failed I never would've ended up like this. My destiny would've been completely changed. This is utterly unfair!"

Ning could feel the deep emotions which filled the man's roar. It was a feeling of deep and intense regret, mixed with resentment! Ning couldn't help but mumble to himself, "So what if you had embarked upon the path of the Omega Dao? Even if you had embarked upon the path of the Omega Dao, you still would've taken part in this war as a member of the Sithe."

Whoosh! Suddenly, the growling Sithe Exalt reached out with both hands. His arms expanded dramatically in size, causing even the formation-diagram imprints on them to twist and distort. As he attacked, he finally spat out a murderous, hate-filled cry: "If you don't help me, you can go die."

The two arms almost instantly expanded to become over a hundred thousand kilometers long. His hands were filled with tremendous power, and he reached out to tear Ning apart. As they swept out towards Ning, they were infused with such strange, profound mysteries that Ning wasn't even able to dodge them; it seemed as though he absolutely had to face this attack head-on.

"Eh?!" Ning turned ashen, and his heart shook with shock. Ever since he had mastered an Eternal Omega Dao, he had always had a feeling that he was in complete control of his surroundings. Every so often, something would surprise him, but nothing truly caught him off-guard.

In this moment, however, Ning truly felt stunned, so stunned that his

heart was shaking. Even his sword-heart had become rather unsteady. It was as though he had seen something that was completely impossible before him.

“But...” Ning had no time to think this matter over, because those two giant palms had already reached him.

# Chapter 4: Completely Stunned

Boom!

With but a thought, Ji Ning immediately summoned the awesome Sword Dao domain around him. Countless streams of sword-light descended upon this place, filling it with attacks that were all comparable to full-strength blows from Otherverse Lords. The sword-light quickly moved in a marvelous way to block the murderous palms that were crashing down towards Ning, doing their best to slow the palms down.

Each of the fingers on the twin palms began to slowly change, as they changed they caused spacetime to change with them. Boom! Boom! Boom! Every single finger completely suppressed the streaks of sword-light that they touched!

This was a truly ferocious attack from the Sithe Exalt. If Ning wished to merely rely on his Sword Dao domain to defend against it, he would have to use the principles of using ‘four grams of force to redirect a thousand kilograms of power’. However, his opponent was clearly at a far higher level of insight than the Blazesun Ruler was; thus, Ning’s attempted block didn’t truly succeed.

Riiiiip! The twin palms appeared in front of Ning and then slammed straight through Ning’s body, tearing it apart into two pieces. Ning’s body gradually faded away into nothingness, followed by a white-robed Ning reappearing over a million kilometers away.

“He’s fast!” Exalt Dauber immediately halted his attacks, because Ning had already moved past his maximum attack range. Due to the suppressive effects of the formation-diagram, he was only able to launch attacks to this distance.

“The Eternal Omega Daos truly are impressive. I can’t help but envy his incredible speed. It would’ve been wonderful if I managed to master an Eternal Omega Dao.” Exalt Dauber couldn’t help but let out a sigh. “To be honest, I knew I wouldn’t be able to kill you. I just wanted to lessen your lifespan by a bit. Unfortunately, I wasn’t even able to force you to draw

your sword.”

Ning stood a million kilometers away, a solemn look on his face. “I didn’t draw my sword, but I had to use up a bit of divine power in using that evasion-art.”

Eternal Omega Daos were as profound as the Daos of ordinary Autarchs. Thus, Ning actually had access to many truly incredible techniques, techniques which one would naturally gain access to upon reaching certain levels of insight. For example, when Ning had become a Daolord of the Fourth Step, he had reached such a high level of insight into the Dao of the Sword that he had gained natural mastery over the ‘Shadowless form’, an invulnerable form. His Dao of the Sword had gained the power to pierce through spacetime and sever karma, and he had reached incredible heights in many different areas.

Nowadays, Ning’s abilities were even more unbelievable than before. If he was truly willing to exhaust his life energy, he could increase his speed to truly unbelievable heights. For example, when Ning had killed the Lonely King, he had taken a single step to move an extremely great distance to slay the Lonely King without the latter even being able to react! This was a testament to Ning’s true speed. Similarly, he had been able to heavily injure the Blazesun Ruler with one strike, and the Blazesun Ruler hadn’t been able to block at all!

As far as warping through spacetime went, if Ning chose to use his sword to tear through spacetime, he would actually be able to travel a greater distance than even the Blacksun was capable of! The Autarchs were able to easily tear through spacetime and warp tremendous distances... but alas, these incredible techniques all consumed enormous amounts of energy. Ning had to be extremely stingy with his energy usage.

Every single scrap of energy and power represented his vital energy. Just now, he had simply used an evasion-art to dodge a single step backwards, ensuring that the Sithe Exalt wasn’t able to touch him. This didn’t take up too much of his divine power, but it still wasn’t nothing.

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“What?!”

“The Sithe Exalt just attacked Daolord Darknorth!” The distant cultivators and the creatures serving the Blazesun Ruler all stared in astonishment.

The Sithe Exalt’s attack was as savage and overbearing as ever. It was strange. The Blazesun Ruler and the Sithe Exalt were clearly on the same level of power, but when they saw the Sithe Exalt attack, they felt a much greater sense of fear!

They had already witnessed the Sithe Exalt attack on numerous occasions, and several cultivators had died as a result. Daolord Darknorth, however, was naturally different. He took just a single step back and was able to dodge with ease.

“One side struck with full power, the other dodged with calm and unhurried grace. Daolord Darknorth truly is more powerful!”

“Incredible,” the cultivators murmured. As for Nuwa, Su Youji, and the others who were close to Ning? They only felt nervous. Given how fast Ning had just moved, it was obvious that he had been forced to use some of his own power.

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“I was only able to force you to use an evasion-art. How much energy could that possibly consume? You’d probably have to use it to take ten steps back in order to match the amount of energy you would use up from a sword-strike,” Exalt Dauber said coldly.

Ning’s face remained as solemn as ever. He stared intently at the Sithe Exalt, as though he was trying to see through to some hidden truth. After staring for several long seconds, Ning finally said, “The claw-arts you just used...”

“Ahaha! So you noticed, eh?” The Sithe Exalt laughed madly. “Ahaha, it makes sense... you are someone who has mastered an Eternal Omega Dao. Of course you would be able to notice!”

“Tell me everything.” Ning stared at him.

“Haha... the only thing I’ll tell you is that you saw exactly what you thought you saw.” The Sithe Exalt, Dauber, continued to laugh with wild abandon. “I won’t tell you anything else,ahaha! I’ll let you worry away and wrack your brains trying to find an answer. Hah! I’m having fun just thinking about it. To be able to mystify the very first master of an Eternal Omega Dao in this Chaosverse... what a wonderful feeling!”

Ning frowned upon hearing this. The Sithe Exalt continued, “Unless... you were willing to kill me and grant me release. Only then would I tell you everything.” Exalt Dauber stared hungrily at Ning.

“Impossible.” Ning shook his head. After seeing the Sithe Exalt’s claw-arts, he felt increasingly certain that there was an enormous secret behind the Exalt’s imprisonment. The Autarchs had to have imprisoned them for an extremely important reason.

“Then you will NEVER know the answer,” Exalt Dauber said viciously.

“Tell me... do you think the Autarchs know the answer?” Ning suddenly smiled.

“You...!” The Sithe Exalt was stunned.

“I’ll go and ask the Autarchs. I was planning to visit them a final time before dying anyhow,” Ning said. He then turned and left.

Exalt Dauber gnashed his teeth as he watched Ning leave, but there was nothing he could do. Use an illusion? That terrifying Daolord had an incredibly powerful Dao-heart, one which was truly perfect. It was already quite incredible that the Sithe Exalt had been able to have even a slight effect on Ning earlier; there was no way he would actually be able to actually influence Ning’s actions. Other methods would be equally futile; there was no way such a major power as Ning would succumb to the likes of mere curiosity.

“I’m going to be imprisoned here forever... tortured forever...” Dauber raised his head, his azure eyes staring into the endless fiery light in the skies. His gaze was filled with hatred and regret... and then he mumbled with a hint of exhaustion, “When will it come to an end? I really don’t want to hold on any longer...”

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Ning turned and left, returning to Nuwa, Patriarch Treewind and the others with a belly full of suspicions. The images of the Sithe Exalt using claw-arts to assault him continually replayed in his mind.

“How is it possible... how could that be? Is this the real reason why the Autarchs have imprisoned them?” Ning continually pondered this question.

Suddenly, Ning’s face turned slightly pale as he raised his head and stared towards the skies. Whoosh! A bolt of thunder suddenly appeared, tearing through the heavens and warping through spacetime, causing a stable but temporary passageway to form.

Right at this moment, eight towering figures appeared within the bolt of thunder, with one being the muscular black-armored Blazesun Ruler. The other seven all had different auras; one was as cold and remote as an endless sea of ice, a second seemed to represent the destruction of space itself... but all of them were of equal magnitude.

“The eight Domain Rulers!!!” Ning’s face turned completely pale. “Have they gone mad? The Blazesun Ruler must be insane!”

Ning had considered the possibility that the Blazesun Ruler might be able to recruit four or five of the others to work with him, but he never would’ve imagined that the legendary eight, the most powerful Sourcewalkers of the Eight Domains of the Chaosverse, would all appear en masse! All eight! Ning would probably exhaust himself and die without being able to do anything to the eight of them; there was simply no way he could fight at full-power for an extended period of time.

“The eight Domain Rulers?! B-but...” Patriarch Treewind, Nuwa, and the others were all shocked.

“That one over there is the Blazesun Ruler. Why is it that I have the feeling that the other seven are just as terrifying as him? Their auras seem to be of equal power.”

“The other seven are also Domain Rulers?”

“What?! The eight Domain Rulers are all here?!” Given that even Ning was shocked, the other cultivators present were all completely scared senseless. They had never even heard of all eight Domain Rulers appearing at the same time!

“They’ve gone mad! Stark raving mad! All eight have rushed over right away? I’m certainly not sticking around!” Ning took a single step forwards and reappeared in front of Patriarch Treewind, Nuwa, and the others. He pulled them into his estate-treasure with a wave of his hand.

Riiiiip! Ning brandished the Darknorth sword a single time, generating a streak of sword-light that tore a rift through spacetime. Ning leaped into that spacetime rift, which quickly closed and healed behind him. By now, only the Autarchs could surpass Ning when it came to tearing through spacetime. There was no way the eight Domain Rulers could possibly stop him at all.

The eight Domain Rulers had just used a valuable treasure to instantly teleport here. They could do nothing but stare, stupefied, as Ning disappeared from right in front of them... and they could find no traces of where he had gone at all.

# Chapter 5: The Castle

If Ji Ning wished to, he could've used his sword to tear through spacetime and let him exit the entire Blazesun Domain! However, as one of the Eight Domains, there were many places within the Blazesun Domain which were extremely hard to traverse via a spacetime warp; to forcibly tear through via the Dao of the Sword would require an enormous amount of energy. Ji Ning wasn't willing to waste his lifespan on something like this. He was able to sense that there was something strange happening in spacetime nearby, and so he chose the exit tunnel to be placed there.

Whoosh. Ning vanished from the Earthfire Continent and followed the sword-formed spacetime tunnel to arrive at an extremely distant place within the Blazefire Domain. "Eh?" Ning swept the area with his gaze, slightly surprised: "I sensed from afar that the spacetime continuum here was quite unique. So this is what this place looks like?"

Ning was currently standing in empty space, facing a distant dimensional whirlpool. Battered bits of debris were flying out of the whirlpool, including some shattered pieces of golden metal, strange mechanical parts, and even an enormous but tattered-looking castle. These bits and fragments were all flying out of the whirlpool, while the whirlpool itself was starting to spin more slowly, almost as though space was going back to normal.

"It seems my luck isn't bad. I managed to find a Sithe trove after just a single teleport," Ning laughed. Ning waved his hand, releasing Nuwa, Su Youji, Patriarch Treewind, Emperor Jade Rainbow, the Flamewing God, and the others. As soon as this awesome group of experts appeared, they began to scan their surroundings. They quickly noticed the dimensional whirlpool and were duly astonished by it and the Sithe treasures floating out of it.

"A Sithe treasure trove?"

"There's actually a treasure trove here?"

“And, by the looks of it, it looks like it just appeared.” Patriarch Treewind and the others were all quite stunned.

As for Ning, he laughed. “I heard that otherverses and Sithe treasures will often appear out of nowhere within the Eight Domains. Is that so?”

“It is.” Patriarch Treewind nodded. “When wandering through the Blazesun Domain, you’ll occasionally stumble across an otherverse which has no owners in it, and Sithe caches will sometimes appear out of nowhere as well. However, the ones we find have usually been floating around in the Blazesun Domain for quite some time. I’ve only heard stories about actually seeing them appear from dimensional whirlpools; this is my first time witnessing it in person.”

“Otherverses are created by Autarchs,” Ning said, “But the Sithe caches were left behind from the Dawn War. Why would they appear here out of nowhere?”

“Not sure.”

“The Autarchs are probably behind this for some reason.” Patriarch Treewind, Emperor Jade Rainbow, and the others who were familiar with the Blazesun Domain all shook their heads.

Ning continued to ponder this question. The giant, battered-looking castle off in the distance was in a more-or-less complete shape, but it had clearly experienced the ravages of battle. Otherwise, why would it be riddled with so many ‘wounds’? But it had been an extremely long period of time since the Dawn War had ended. Why had it and all these other treasures suddenly appeared now? Ning had only sensed that something strange was happening in spacetime in this location while he himself was warping through spacetime, which was why he had exited here.

Over the years, there had been other instances in the Eight Domains where Sithe treasure caches had appeared out of nowhere. In fact, even Nuwa had somehow vanished from the Three Realms and then appeared in the Blazesun Domain!

And the otherverses... those were personally hand-crafted by the Autarchs. Why would they appear here as well?

“Master, we have an entire Sithe treasury in front of us!” Hegemon Azurefiend was rather excited.

“Darknorth.” Nuwa remained quite calm, and she immediately asked, “Are the eight Domain Rulers still in pursuit of us?”

Ning laughed. “Don’t worry, they aren’t able to track us down at all. However... I really don’t understand what the eight of them were thinking. I still can’t believe all eight of them joined forces...”

“They probably have plans of their own.” Nuwa felt quite frustrated as well. Anyone faced with all eight Domain Rulers at once would feel a sense of tremendous pressure.

“They can keep searching if they want. I have no desire to waste my time on them.” Ning didn’t wish to waste any of his vital energy; otherwise, if he truly went all-out, he’d be able to dominate all eight of them. All they would be able to do would be to endure his attacks as best as they could, relying on their innate gifts; if they managed to tank the hits, they would live, but if they failed they would perish! Ning himself felt that if he was lucky, he would at most be able to kill one of the eight if all eight joined forces.

But why? What was the point? Ning naturally preferred to stay far, far away from the eight of them.

“Master, let’s go take a look at those floating Sithe treasures.” Flamewing stared quite curiously at the distant castle and the other relics floating in space.

“Darknorth?” Nuwa looked at Ning as well. She, too, felt curious about this treasure cache.

“Daolord.” All the others were also intrigued, but as they saw it, since Ning had discovered this cache its contents would naturally belong to him.

“Go ahead and take a look.” Ning laughed. “Just be careful. Don’t just rummage through things blindly; there might be traps hidden there.”

“Alright.”

“Let’s go.”

“Don’t worry, Daolord. We’ll be careful.”

“Master, I’m going to go take a look as well.” Not even Su Youji could refrain from taking a look. All of them flew towards the Sithe cache, with only Protector Whitethaw continuing to solemnly stand guard over Ning.

By now, the dimensional vortex had already vanished, allowing space to go back to normal. Ning didn’t really care that much about the Sithe treasury; he was already close to the Autarchs in power! Why would he care about Sithe treasures or armaments?

“What did I just see earlier, though?” Ning pondered by himself, his mind thinking back to the Earthfire Continent and the sneak-attack the imprisoned Sithe Exalt had launched against him. “It’s completely impossible, but I can’t explain it any other way...”

To this very moment, Ning still felt quite stunned by the implications. This was also part of the reason why he had no interest in exploring the Sithe treasure cache.

“I definitely wasn’t seeing things. That imprisoned Sithe Exalt... it had definitely reached the Autarch level of insight!” Ning was shaking inside. That Sithe Autarch had probably reached Hegemony in the Dao of Bewilderment, but the twin claw attacks he had launched against Ning had been incomparably profound. Ning hadn’t been able to disturb it or shake it at all with his Sword Dao domain.

Other cultivators might not be able to tell, but Ning had already reached a level of insight which was comparable to that of the Autarchs, and had also received guidance from legacies left behind by Autarch Awakener and Autarch Bolin. That brief moment of combat was enough for Ning to ascertain that the Sithe Exalt, Dauber, had definitely employed Autarchy-level mysteries in launching his twin claw attacks!

“The Autarch level of insight... that means he should be an Autarch!” Ning simply didn’t understand. “B-but... he ended up being imprisoned, just like that?”

“If he really was an Autarch, it would be incredibly easy for him and his peers to capture the Flamewing God... but instead, three of them had to work together to accomplish this.

“In fact, the Sithe once had multiple Exalts. If the Sithe Exalts truly were Autarchs, they would’ve been able to overwhelm the cultivator civilizations with ease... but instead, their performance in combat proved that they were inferior to our Autarchs.

“And when Exalt Dauber battled against me... I could sense that although he had reached an incredibly high level of insight, the power of his attacks were vastly inferior to mine.”

Ning truly was puzzled. He felt certain that Sithe Exalt Dauber had reached the Autarch level of insight, but the amount of power the Exalt had unleashed in battle was much lower than that level; at most, it was on par with the Blazesun Ruler’s. Ning had only been forced to use a tiny bit of his energy, and a single backwards step had allowed him to dodge the attack with ease. Clearly, Ning had completely outstripped the Exalt in power.

“How odd. There’s no way I was wrong; he has to be at the Autarch level in insight, but for some reason he’s only able to unleash a fraction of their power.” Ning mused to himself, “It felt as though his techniques were only able to employ a tiny amount of the power of the Dao.”

For major powers, the power of the Dao was paramount. The higher a level of insight you reached, the more important the power of your Dao. Ning, for example, was able to form a Sword Dao domain with just a thought. He didn’t even need to use up any of his own energy, but the domain would be filled with streaks of sword-light that were comparable to full-strength strikes from Otherverse Lords! This was the power of the Dao, not Ning’s own internal power! When he himself fought in battle and used his sword-arts, his sword-arts were so profound that they were capable of unleashing many marvelous effects. This happened because he would use a fraction of his own energy to fully command the power of the Dao and unleash even more devastating amounts of might.

But... the Sithe Exalt was completely different. Ning could tell that he had clearly reached the Autarch level of insight into the Dao, but his techniques were only able to unleash a fraction of the Dao's power. As a result, the overall power of his attacks was merely at the Blazesun Ruler's level.

"So what's the reason for this? As far as I can tell, he should be an Autarch... but he's dramatically weaker than the Autarchs. Or perhaps these Sithe Exalts are pseudo-Autarchs? Perhaps they have inherently flawed Daos, which is why they are unable to unleash much power from them?"

Ning was filled with many questions. Why did these Exalts have such a high level of insight into the Dao? Were they truly Autarchs, or were they pseudo-Autarchs? Why was it that the true Autarchs did not kill them and instead chose to torture them forever?

"I imagine only the Autarchs know the answer to these questions," Ning mused.

"Darknorth! Hurry over here!" Nuwa suddenly called out from nearby that distant, levitating castle.

# Chapter 6: Formation

“What’s wrong?” Ji Ning took a single step forwards and warped through space, rippling through it to appear right next to the battered, scar-covered castle.

Nuwa, Patriarch Treewind, the Flamewing God, Emperor Jade Rainbow, and the others all stood next to the castle, completely helpless. Nuwa pointed at the giant castle, which was fully fifteen thousand meters long. “We’ve already completely searched the place, and we’re sure that there’s a dimensional space within it... but we haven’t been able to open it up, no matter what we do, nor can we find a way to get inside. This castle seems to be quite complicated.”

“Let me take a look.” Ning scrutinized it carefully. The enormous castle just hung there in space, covered with many scars and with a number of damaged parts floating around it. Ning slowly flew in a circle around the castle, inspecting every part of it with care. He also took a look at the damaged parts.

“How does it look?” Flamewing couldn’t help but ask, “Master, are you able to open it up?”

“Even if I was, you wouldn’t be able to do anything to it. Why are YOU in such a rush?” Ning teased.

“I’m just curious!” Flamewing chortled. In truth, Su Youji and the others were quite curious as well.

Ning continued to inspect the castle for as much time as was needed to boil a kettle of tea. Suddenly, he waved his hand and caused two distant fragments to fly into his hands. One was roughly three meters long, while the other was merely fist-sized.

Clack! Clack! Ning placed the two fragments into two different locations on the castle. Rumble... instantly, the entire castle began to slowly swivel on its base, which looked like a series of leaf-shaped mechanisms. The center of this towering castle suddenly parted, revealing an entrance way.

“It’s open! It’s open!” Flamewing said excitedly.

“Daolord, you truly are impressive,” Hegemon Goodsong flattered. He was quite skilled in this regard. Ever since he had become a Golden Emperor, he had shamelessly chosen to follow Ning and flattered him nonstop. Ning had been in need of someone who was familiar with the Blazesun Domain, and so had nodded and accepted his service. Hegemon Goodsong had done his utmost to serve as Ning’s pathfinder, and so Ning had naturally decided to give him some tips from time to time. There were countless Hegemons and Emperors who envied Hegemon Goodsong, but alas... Ning wouldn’t accept a retainer without a good reason.

“This Sithe artifact seems to be usable... and generally speaking, castle-shaped Sithe weapons are incredibly powerful,” Patriarch Treewind said with praise. Due to the war, many powerful Sithe war machines had ended up being completely destroyed or rendered inoperable. The ‘Stone Hellephant Wall’ which Ning had once discovered, which had originally been known as the Sithe warship ‘Tigerhill’, was one example of an unusable Sithe war machine.

“This Sithe castle is probably comparable in value to Houwu City,” Emperor Jade Rainbow agreed.

Ning agreed as well. It was generally quite easy to tell from just a visual inspection as to how powerful Sithe weapons were. Chains, axes, shields... these were held items that generally wouldn’t be all that powerful! The Blacksun, Houwu City, the ‘Tigerhill’, and this giant castle in front of them... these were all large-scale war machines and generally were incredibly potent.

With but a thought, Ning summoned his Sword Dao domain and used it to completely cover the entire castle, as well as its internals. “Nothing dangerous inside. Let’s go take a look.” Ning immediately flew into the entrance.

Nuwa, Su Youji, Patriarch Treewind, and the others all followed Ning inside.

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The passageway was very deep, dark, and gloomy. From the outside, the castle looked as though it was merely fifteen thousand meters long, but on the inside it was absolutely enormous. Ning's group flew more than a thousand kilometers along the hallway before they finally reached an open, empty region. This region was divided up into three different levels, with each level representing three different core controls used to operate the castle.

There were Sithe corpses floating above the altars which existed in all three levels. The corpses all emanated the auras of Eternal Emperors. There were also some Black Emperors and Golden Emperors who had undergone the Ritual Sacrificium; all of them had perished here.

Ning slowly descended upon the bottommost layer, then glanced at his surroundings. Nuwa and the others came flying over as well, also landing on the altar at the very bottom.

"The insides of this castle are intact. How did they all die?" Azurefiend glanced at the corpses in astonishment. "I don't see any wounds on these corpses."

"Someone managed to kill these Golden Emperors through the protection of the castle." Nuwa and the others were all quite stunned.

"A total of thirty-two Sithe are inside here," Ning said. "It had to have been an Autarch who used either karmic techniques or truesoul destruction techniques to bypass the castle walls and slay the Sithe inside."

The Autarchs had chosen different Daos and thus had different areas of specialty. Some, like Autarch Bolin, specialized in frontal attacks. Others had techniques which were more mysterious and harder to understand.

"There are actually three command centers." Ning raised his head to look at the other two, his forehead creased into a frown.

"The bottom command center has an enormous formation within it which can be used to reach out from the base of the castle and connect it to an enormous area around it! This castle can be used to command, consolidate, and protect an entire region. It will gather chaos energy from

the area around it.”

“The middle command center is comparatively simpler. It controls a scanning formation, ensuring that any opponent who appears will find it almost impossible to escape. It has tremendous control over dimensional power, allowing it to scan an incredibly vast area and discover even the most minute of spatial ripples. Even I would probably be unable to avoid its detection,” Ning said with a surprised sigh.

“As for the top command center... it is also quite complicated. It involves a powerful offensive formation that gathers together the power of lightning, focusing it together into an attack of incredible power. Even Golden Emperors would probably perish before it,” Ning said slowly as he continued to inspect the insides of the castle.

“Is it really that impressive? That means this is a perfect weapon of war,” Hegemon Azurefiend said with a shocked sigh.

“During the Dawn War, it was probably just as important as the Blacksun,” Ning said. “This, too, is a war machine that is capable of affecting the flow of battle in an entire region. I’m amazed that we were lucky enough to stumble upon such an important war machine.”

“Haha, given your incredible prowess, Daolord, it is only natural that your luck is also extraordinary,” Patriarch Treewind praised.

Ning himself felt rather puzzled. Luck, eh? It was true that he was held in high favor by the prime essences of the Chaosverse. When he had failed his Daomerge, he could sense that the prime essences had sighed on his behalf. If the reason that he had just stumbled upon an incredibly valuable war-fort was because he was ‘lucky’ thanks to being favored by the prime essences... even Ning could do nothing but sigh.

Sithe war machines of this level of power were incredibly hard to find. Lord Houwu had only become known as the ‘Lord Governor of Houwu’ after finding Houwu City, while the Blacksun had made a ‘Realmslord’ out of Realmslord Windgrace.

“I would need at least three people to take control of the formations in order to operate this castle.” Ning frowned. “And all three need to be

Hegemons.”

“Me and my avatar can account for two, but that won’t be enough.” Nuwa felt rather worried.

“What about me?” Azurefiend volunteered.

Ning shook his head. “I’m planning to leave this castle in my homeland. Azurefiend, are you really volunteering to stay in my homeland forever?”

Azurefiend was speechless. He loved freedom and loved adventuring. He really wouldn’t be able to endure staying in Daolord Darknorth’s homeland forever.

“The formations within this castle are quite complicated. Nuwa, you probably wouldn’t be able to take direct control of them either,” Ning said. “Let me take a closer look.” Ning was planning to modify the central command centers of this castle, making it more suitable for the Three Realms.

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Ning himself was able to easily control all three formation-diagrams, but modifying them even slightly would be difficult. Ning actually ended up creating a fourth formation-diagram inside the castle, one which would serve as the ‘master controls’. Thanks to this fourth formation-diagram, a single Emperor would be able to simultaneously control all of the castle’s functions. This took Ning over eight hundred million years to accomplish.

“Ahah! Finally, I’ve succeeded.” Ning let out a loud laugh, his laughter echoing within the empty space. Nuwa, Su Youji, and the others who had been quietly meditating all immediately stopped their training.

“Nuwa,” Ning said with a smile, “I added an additional formation-diagram that simplifies the process of controlling this castle! Once the castle has been activated, it will be able to scan to a distance of over a trillion kilometers, and it’ll be able to stand guard over this region. When I go back, I plan to modify the formations protecting our homeland and make this castle the centerpiece of our defenses. If anyone dares to attack our home, they’ll have to endure an assault from the castle.”

“My modifications have resulted in a decreasing in its scanning range, and have also resulted in it only being able to focus its firepower on a single target... but I think it should be enough,” Ning said. “Besides, if we have enough Hegemons in the future, you can just ignore my fourth formation-diagram and take direct control over the three original ones.”

“Understood.” Nuwa nodded.

Ning waved his hand, causing a jade slip to appear with instructions on how to control the castle. “Take it.” Ning handed the slip over to Nuwa. “Test it out and see how strong it is.”

“Alright.” Nuwa scanned the slip, quickly memorizing the information.

“Let’s go out,” Ning said, “And take a look at the castle’s power.” The group of cultivators immediately left the castle, leaving only Nuwa behind. They all stood outside in the void, staring at the castle.

Rumble... the very tip of the castle suddenly began to light up. BOOM! An invisible dimensional ripple suddenly spread out to cover an area of a trillion kilometers, making it so that nothing within this area could escape its sensors.

# Chapter 7: Acting On Orders

There was a round disk located at the 'neck' of the castle, which was divided into a black side and a white side. Flickers of terrifying lightning could be seen gathering around that location. According to the castle's original configuration and power, it was capable of shooting out two bolts of thunder simultaneously, each one carrying a tremendous amount of power. In order to simplify the controls, Ji Ning had made it so that just a single bolt of thunder could be unleashed. However, this had the beneficial side effect of reducing energy costs by 50%. Attacks of such power consumed enormous amounts of energy, after all.

"That looks absolutely terrifying. I can sense that the power of that thunder is more than enough to wipe me out," Azurefiend said with a sense of lingering fear.

"You? Even I would find it hard to survive." Patriarch Treewind felt fear as well, as did Emperor Jade Rainbow and the others.

These types of Sithe war machines were absolutely terrifying. During the Dawn War, they were used to stabilize entire regions; so long as an Autarch didn't intervene, these things spelled certain doom for any cultivators who faced them! However, they had to build up power before launching each shot, and so during the Dawn War the cultivators who were faced with these terrifying war machines used their own lives to 'block' their attacks and buy time for their peers.

BOOM! A streak of lightning suddenly shot out, causing both space and time to congeal into a liquefied state.

A distant, fiery-red boulder which was levitating in the distance suddenly disappeared, silently and soundlessly. The bolt of lightning briefly showed itself as the boulder was destroyed, followed by it immediately continuing its forwards surge. The power of this attack was so great that everyone save for Ning and the Flamewing God felt utterly stunned. This attack was more than enough to wipe them all out.

"That attack was too fast. Space wasn't just twisted, it was liquefied!"

Anyone within a range of ten billion kilometers would find it almost impossible to dodge,” Patriarch Treewind said with a frown.

“The only option would be to stay out of its range. In the future, I’ll have to remember to stay at least fifty billion kilometers away from that thing,” Emperor Jade Rainbow said with a laugh. “If I’m too close, I won’t even be able to dodge. Treewind, your disciple is now even more powerful than you are.”

“Nuwa has always been far more talented than me. Even without Daolord Darknorth’s help, she would eventually grow to eclipse me in might,” Patriarch Treewind chortled. Daolord Darknorth was wholeheartedly helping out Nuwa, and Nuwa was his disciple. As a result, Treewind himself would benefit from the process. The more powerful this female disciple of his became, the more influential he himself would become.

Whoosh. The silver-robed Nuwa flew out from the castle. She waved her hand, causing the castle to quickly shrink to become palm-sized and fall within her palm. Clearly, she had already fully mastered the control technique Ning had given her and was in full control of this castle.

“It really is powerful. With this castle under my control, our homeland shall be impregnable,” Nuwa said, her face covered with joy. “Given how mighty its attacks are, its defensive prowess should be even better. Even the likes of the Blazesun Ruler would find it difficult to break through.”

Ning felt delighted as well. After fleeing from the Earthfire Continent, he had actually warped to this place and discovered a treasure that he was in desperate need of! He had actually been planning to spend some time finding a treasure which would be suitable for the Three Realm’s defense; now, one had just appeared before him.

“Darknorth, this castle is still riddled with damage. What should we do?” Nuwa looked at Ning.

“There’s nothing that can be done. I’m certainly not able to repair Sithe artifacts,” Ning said with a laugh. “Thankfully, at least its interior is in perfect shape. The damage on the outside makes it look a bit ugly, but all

we need to do is add another protective layer on top and it'll look as good as new."

"Eh?" Ning suddenly frowned and turned to stare off into the distant. Boom! A faint dimensional ripple appeared, followed by a strange creature with a sharp head and furry tail appear. It stared curiously in their direction.

"These creatures again?" Nuwa said.

"That thunderbolt you launched was probably so powerful it attracted their attention. We've been discovered," Patriarch Treewind said. "These creatures seem quite weak; the strongest of them are perhaps just barely comparable to ordinary Hegemons." Patriarch Treewind and the others naturally wouldn't care too much about a squad of such weak creatures.

"Daolord, these creatures are often under the Blazesun Ruler's command," Emperor Jade Rainbow said hurriedly. "Now that they've seen you, they'll probably send word to the Blazesun Ruler and he's probably going to rush over here again."

"The Blazesun Ruler..." Ning felt resigned. There was nothing he could do against the eight Domain Rulers. "Let's go."

"Daolord Darknorth!" A voice suddenly rang out, followed by the most powerful of the tailed beasts flying towards Ning at high speed.

"Eh?" Ning glanced at the strange creature, puzzled.

"My name is Stoneblade." The strange creature bowed respectfully, then said, "My humblest greetings to the mighty Daolord Darknorth."

"Oh, so you actually recognize me?" Ning smiled.

"The Blazesun Ruler long ago spread word that he is searching for you and provided a great deal of information about you. When I also saw Nuwa and Patriarch Treewind by your side, I naturally was sure that it was you," the creature said respectfully.

"The Blazesun Ruler certainly is persistent. It seems everyone has been notified about me, including you and your peers. Speak. What do you need

from me?” Ning asked.

The strange creature said respectfully, “The Blazesun Ruler sent word long ago that if we encountered Daolord Darknorth, we were to immediately inform you that they bear you no ill-will at all, nor do they intend to fight you. Instead, there is something important they must inform you.”

“Oh?” Ning was puzzled. “Something important? What is it?”

“That I do not know. After discovering you, I immediately sent word back. I imagine the Domain Ruler will soon be notified, and they’ll probably hasten here at full speed. Once you see him you’ll know the answer, Daolord,” the creature said.

“Understood.” Ning nodded.

The strange creature then bowed respectfully a second time before retreating.

“Darknorth, the Blazesun Ruler and the other Domain Rulers have important business with you?” Nuwa was puzzled. “What important business could it possibly be?”

“Could it be a scheme of some sort?” Flamewing immediately asked.

Ning laughed. “Flamewing, when did you learn about ‘schemes’? Haha! However, I don’t think it is a trick or a trap... because I’m powerful enough that if I wish to leave, the eight of them are completely unable to stop me. There’s no need to lie to me either! And, when I saw all eight of them last time, I felt quite puzzled. For all eight Domain Rulers to join forces against me is quite odd. Now, it seems, they have other business with me.”

“We shall wait here for a time. Let’s wait for the eight Domain Rulers to come and see what they want,” Ning said.

“Very well.”

“We fled so quickly last time, I didn’t even have a chance to see what the other seven looked like.”

“Me neither.”

“I saw two of them. This time, I’m going to see what all eight of them look like.” Hegemon Goodsong, Treewind, Jade Rainbow, Azurefiend, and the others all felt quite relaxed. With Ning present, they had nothing to fear at all. In any other situation, they would’ve been utterly terrified by the prospect of facing the eight Domain Rulers.

Roughly an hour later.

Whoosh! A bolt of thunder appeared, splitting through the void and creating a temporary but stable spacetime tunnel. Eight figures appeared within the tunnel. It was the Blazesun Ruler and the rest of the eight. When they saw the distant Ning, they revealed looks of delight and hurriedly flew towards him.

“It really doesn’t seem as though they come with bad intentions,” Nuwa sent mentally.

“Let’s see just what they want, exactly. They have infinite lifespans and should be living without any worries or concerns whatsoever. There shouldn’t be anything they need me to do for them,” Ning said. And of course, if they came for his ‘Eternal Omega Sword Dao’, there was no way he would transmit it to them.

Soon, the eight Domain Rulers arrived. They all shrank down to human size as they met with Ning and his team.

“Respectful greetings, Daolord Darknorth.” All of them spoke quite courteously.

“Respectful greetings, Domain Rulers.” Ning smiled. “Last time I saw you, Blazesun Ruler, you were thirsting for battle and completely mad with bloodlust. This time, all eight of you have appeared but are so courteous... and I hear there is something important you wish to tell me? Might I ask what that is?”

The eight Domain Rulers traded a glance. The Blazesun Ruler voluntarily stepped forward and said, rather embarrassed, “Daolord Darknorth, I was rash in my actions. As soon as we fought, I immediately knew that I was no match for you. A while ago, when we came to speak to you at the Earthfire Continent, it wasn’t for the sake of continuing the

fight. Rather, we came on orders.”

“On orders?” Ning was startled.

“Yes.” A Sourcewalker dressed in deep blue armor respectfully replied, “After you appeared in the Blazesun Domain, word of your presence quickly made its way to the Autarch. The Autarch is within the Quintessence of the Chaosverse and is too busy to come out, and so she instructed the eight of us to find you and bring you to meet with her.”

“We’ve been searching for you this entire time. Last time, we found you, but you left so quickly that we weren’t able to catch up,” a Sourcewalker dressed in fiery armor said.

Ning was enlightened. “The Autarch is located amongst the prime essences and wishes to meet with me? Might I ask, which Autarch is it?”

# Chapter 8: Entering the Quintessence

The Blazesun Ruler said hurriedly, “It is Autarch Skyfeeder. Ever since the war against the Sithe concluded, the Autarch has spent almost all of her time within the Quintessence of the Chaosverse. We were lucky enough to have received some guidance from her.”

“Skyfeeder?” Ji Ning nodded slightly. The only Autarchs he knew of were Autarch Bolin, Autarch Awakener, and Autarch Titanos. He didn’t really know much about the others.

“Go ahead and lead the way,” Ning said.

“Daolord...” The Sourcewalker dressed in deep blue armor glanced rather hesitantly at the many cultivators behind Ning. “The Autarch is within the prime essences, a place filled with tremendous power. There is no way ordinary cultivators can enter there! You need to have either reached the incredible level of the Autarchs, which you Daolord have, or be like us and the Chaos Primordials. We’re able to endure the power of that place with our powerful bodies. Weaker cultivators are completely incapable of moving about within the prime essences. I’m afraid that we would at most be able to bring you and your Chaos Primordial.”

“Don’t worry about us at all.”

“The Autarch wishes to see YOU, Daolord. We wouldn’t dare go,” Patriarch Treewind, Azurefiend, and the others said hurriedly. They had all but stopped breathing when they heard that an Autarch had summoned Ning. How could they possibly dare to get involved in a meeting between Daolord Darknorth and such a supremely august presence?

“Darknorth, go ahead and go. Don’t worry about us,” Nuwa concurred.

“Very well.” Ning nodded. Even if he did bring them, there was no way for them to move about inside the prime essences. “Stay here within the Blazesun Domain. Once I return, I’ll reunite with you.”

“Very well.”

“Understood.” Su Youji and the others hurriedly assented.

“Darknorth, you must be careful,” Nuwa instructed.

“Don’t worry.” Ning smiled. The eight Domain Rulers wouldn’t dare to cause trouble, which meant that Nuwa’s team of cultivators had nothing to fear.

“Take me with you, Master! Take me with you!” Flamewing said eagerly. “It’s been forever since I was back inside the prime essences!”

Ning laughed and nodded. “Very well. Follow me.”

“This way please, Daolord Darknorth.” The Blazesun Ruler took out his warship and invited Ning and Flamewing inside. Moments later, the warship tore through spacetime and disappeared without a trace.

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The eight Domain Rulers used all the considerable tools at their disposal. Just three days later, they exited the Blazesun Domain and entered a silent, empty region of space. There was a total of ten people in this group, and they all stood there within the empty region.

“This Sithe warship is useless once we go inside the prime essences. Once we go inside, we’ll have to slowly fly on our own,” the Blazesun Ruler explained.

“Open up!” One of the Domain Rulers stepped forward and made a slashing motion with his hand. Swoosh! A gateway was torn within spacetime, and at the opposite end of the gateway was a region filled with an incredible, awesome amount of power and energy.

“After you, Daolord,” the eight Domain Rules said very respectfully.

“Let’s go.” Ning was the first to step into the spacetime door, with Flamewing and the eight Domain Rulers following from behind. After they entered, the spacetime door vanished without a trace, leaving behind a very ordinary-seeming region. Ordinary cultivators who came here, including Otherverses Lords, were completely incapable of finding the prime essences.

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The region they entered was filled with overwhelming power. Imagine a mortal falling into an ocean; the entire area around him would be surrounded by endless waves of suffocating might. The pressure from these waves could easily cause even Hegemons to perish, while Otherverse Lords would find it too difficult to take as much as a single step here.

Rumble...

The eight Domain Rulers and the Flamewing God were all under tremendous pressure as well. They had powerful bodies and thus were able to endure it, especially Flamewing whose body was virtually indestructible and who could thus completely ignore the pressure. However, they still had to use all the power they could muster in order to advance through this region. Thankfully, Flamewing had such an endless source of power that this wasn't of concern.

"Which way shall we go?" Ning was the most relaxed of the ten. The Sword Dao domain emanating from him was enough to cause the surrounding pressure to instantly vanish without a trace.

This was because the Dao of his Sword Dao domain was the same as the prime essence of the Dao of the Sword. The prime essence of the Dao of the Sword was naturally part of the collection of prime essences, and so Ning was able to move through this region as easily as a fish moving through water. He didn't suffer any pressure or sense of rejection at all.

Unfortunately, Ning wasn't able to protect anyone else. The power of the prime essences was omnipresent, while the prime essence of the Dao of the Sword was merely one part of them. If Ning pulled Flamewing and the others into his estate-world, they would be protected. Otherwise, they would simply have to endure it on their own.

"Just follow us, Daolord," the Blazesun Ruler said respectfully.

"If you feel tired, you can rest inside my estate-world for a time," Ning said with a chuckle.

"No need."

"Don't worry about us, Daolord. We're used to this place."

“Haha, this bit of pressure is nothing at all, Master!” The eight Domain Rulers and Flamewing continued to advance rapidly, but they were all using their full power to do so. As for Ning, he was able to effortlessly follow from behind.

Ning scanned at his surroundings. The Quintessence itself was like a place that was divided into many different ‘lakes’, with each lake representing a prime essence. He saw the prime essence of thunder, the prime essence of water, the prime essence of ice, the prime essence of the Dao of the Sword... every single prime essence was here and overflowing with might. Through them, Ning was able to more clearly scry some of the secrets of the various Daos.

The prime essence of the Dao of the Sword was nothing more than one of many prime essences.

“This is the true foundation of our entire Chaosverse,” Ning murmured softly. “Even I am only able to control a tiny part of it.”

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All of them flew very fast, but even so it took them a full five days before they flew past the many different prime essences. Finally, they arrived at an ordinary-looking wooden cottage that was floating in midair. There was a small courtyard surrounding this wooden cottage which looked rather like a small crop field.

“Here we are.” Looks of delight appeared on the faces of all eight Domain Rulers. Swoosh! Swoosh! Swoosh! They hurriedly flew closer, stepping into the courtyard around the wooden cottage. Ning and Flamewing followed them from behind.

Invisible barriers had been placed here which kept out the natural pressure of the Quintessence. Only now did everyone finally relax.

“What a marvelous formation.” Ning scanned the formation, then let out a sigh of approval. A formation capable of completely blocking out the pressures of the Quintessence is impressive indeed. Ning then glanced at the surrounding area. He could sense that no one was here aside from them. He immediately turned to the Blazesun Ruler and asked, “Where is

the Autarch?”

“This is a place where the Autarch often rests,” the blue-armored Sourcewalker said. “She’s cultivating nearby. As soon as we entered her residence, she would be immediately notified. She’ll be coming soon.”

“Cultivating nearby?” Ning glanced at the area around them. “Eh?” Soon, Ning was able to detect a strange ripple of power emanating from a place off in the distance. This was a temporal ripple, and it contained utterly savage levels of power. It was almost like a terrifying apocalyptic demon that sought to devour all before it. Ning couldn’t help but turn slightly pale; how was it possible that ‘time’ itself could become so terrifying?

However, the ripples quickly calmed down. A short while later, an ephemeral figure began to drift towards them, quickly leaving the prime essences and arriving in front of the wooden cottage.

This was a willowy woman whose features Ning wouldn’t describe as exceptionally beautiful. In the Three Realms, her features would be considered quite common and ordinary. Her face was slightly plump, her gaze was gentle, and her aura was both awesome and mysterious, tinged with the ripples of time. Time itself was like an obedient child which swirled around her. She was the only female Autarch in all the Chaosverse... Autarch Skyfeeder.

“Darknorth greets you, Autarch,” Ning said immediately.

Autarch Skyfeeder walked barefoot into her courtyard, then smiled merrily at Ning and said, “Skyfeeder greets you, Daolord Darknorth.”

Both spoke quite courteously. As soon as they glimpsed each other, they were able to sense the level of insight the other had reached.

Ning could sense how tremendously powerful this Autarch’s ‘Temporal Daobirth Essence’ was, while the Autarch was able to sense how incredible Ning’s ‘Eternal Omega Sword Dao’ was. They had embarked upon different paths, but they had now reached the same heights of power.

Autarch Skyfeeder and the other Autarchs had all first become

Hegemons after fusing multiple Supreme Daos together, then broke through to become Autarchs!

Ning had embarked upon the path of the Omega Dao, and he had eventually come to master the Eternal Omega Sword Dao. Although strictly speaking he was still just an 'Eternal Emperor', he truly had reached the same heights of insight as the Autarchs possessed; his only weakness was that the breadth of his understanding wasn't quite as wide. In actual combat, however, their blows would be incredibly close to each other in might... but of course, as someone who failed the Daomerge, Ning wasn't able to fight for too long.

"Darknorth, let's chat inside," Autarch Skyfeeder said. She pushed the door to the wooden cottage open. The cottage was quite plain, with a few seams appearing between the wooden logs that allowed one to clearly see what was inside.

Autarch Skyfeeder sat down on the ground in front of a table. Ning did the same in front of another table. Each table had a flagon of wine, and the fragrant aroma of the wine instantly caused Ning's eyes to light up. This was, without a doubt, the finest wine he had ever seen.

Although the two of them were merely separated from the eight Domain Rulers and Flamewing by a thin wooden door, the nine were completely unable to hear a word of the conversation within.

# Chapter 9: The Autarchs

When Ji Ning smelled the aroma of the wine, he couldn't help but pour himself a cup and taste it first. He then nodded and sighed happily, "What fine wine. My soul itself is uplifted by it; in fact, I can sense that even the disintegration of my truesoul slowed down for a brief instant."

"Unfortunately, the disintegration of the truesoul is irreversible." Autarch Skyfeeder slowly poured herself a cup, her voice tinged with regret. "Otherwise, our civilization would have given birth to a truly incredible figure. To tell you the truth, your rise is far more more important to our civilization than the rise of a new Autarch. You are, after all, the very first who truly mastered an Eternal Omega Dao. Sadly..."

"I can only blame myself for not having trained well enough," Ning said with a laugh. "Perhaps if I was just a bit better, I would've succeeded in the Daomerge."

"The path is always the most perilous for the first trailblazer," Autarch Skyfeeder said. "There has never been anyone who has mastered an Eternal Omega Dao before you, and so there were no guideposts or experiences you could draw upon. If you did, you probably would've succeeded in the Daomerge."

Ning was startled. Indeed. He had been so very, very close. If he had just a few extra months worth of time, he probably would've been able to find the flaws during his Daomerge and he would've been able to discover the true Eternal Omega Sword Dao before it ended. Alas, he had wasted three entire years on perfecting his sword-heart.

Ning let out a chuckle. "Well, there always has to be a trailblazer. To serve as the trailblazer for the Eternal Omega Daos isn't a bad destiny to have."

Autarch Skyfeeder smiled and nodded. "I just heard about you a short while ago. When I found out you were in the Blazesun Domain, I immediately sent the eight Domain Rulers out to search for you. I have something important to discuss with you, something which involves the

very existence of all cultivator civilizations in the Chaosverse. We need your help.”

“Something involving the very existence of the cultivator civilizations?” Ning was startled. This sounded serious. “Is there something which is capable of threatening us?” Ning couldn’t help but ask.

“There is indeed.” Autarch Skyfeeder nodded. “Just now, I informed the other Autarchs of your arrival. They are all hastening here as fast as they can. When the others arrive, we’ll discuss this matter. It is a blessing that the cultivator civilizations have finally given birth to someone who has mastered an Eternal Omega Dao. Unfortunately, you failed the Daomerge. If you had succeeded, we would be even more overjoyed.”

“The other Autarchs?” Ning was rather shocked.

“The cultivator civilizations currently have a total of six surviving Autarchs. One of them is permanently stationed in front of the Sithelands and won’t be able to make it. The other four will all be coming,” Autarch Skyfeeder said.

Ning nodded slowly. Six Autarchs in total, with five of them coming to meet him. This was indeed a weighty affair they wished to discuss.

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Autarch Titanos’ residence.

Autarch Titanos was almost always secluded away within his private chambers, analyzing the marvelous parts and artifacts which floated in the center. “Huh?” Suddenly, Autarch Titanos’ face turned pale.

“WHAT?!?” The two fleshy antennae on top of Autarch Titanos’ head suddenly stood up straight, and his golden eyes bulged out. “An Eternal Omega Dao? Someone from our civilization has finally mastered an Eternal Omega Dao?!” Autarch Titanos was truly stunned. “And his name is... eh? Darknorth? Wasn’t that kid I saw a while ago also named Darknorth? Back then, he had merely improved his Omega Dao to the level of a Daolord of the Fourth Step. He actually mastered an Eternal Omega Dao?”

“This is huge! How did it happen that the old biddy Skyfeeder actually ended up being the one to find out and notify me?!” Autarch Titanos completely ignored the Sithe artifacts floating around in his room. He immediately charged outside in a fine rage, slamming open the door with a boom.

“Master.” The azure-robed youth immediately moved to welcome him.

“XIAN!” Autarch Titanos said furiously, “Have you heard about the Daomerge of that kid who once asked me for help? Daolord Darknorth?”

“Heard? Of course I heard.” The azure-robed youth nodded repeatedly. “This was major news which quickly spread everywhere! He failed his Daomerge, but he still managed to master an Eternal Omega Dao. Even the Lonely King of the Icepeak Army was killed by a single slash of his sword. He went out searching for Nuwa, and Realmslord Windgrace did everything in his power to help spread the word. He even asked us to help out! I told quite a number of my friends about this. By now, I imagine the major powers in most of the realmverses and otherverses all know about him.”

“BUT I DIDN’T KNOW!” Autarch Titanos stared at him, eyes bulging. “Why the hell didn’t you tell MEEEE!!!”

“B-but...” A baffled and miserable look was on the azure-robed youth’s face. “Master, didn’t you forbid me from disturbing you while you were analyzing those Sithe weapons unless something really big happened?”

“This IS big! This is literally BIGGER THAN ANYTHING ELSE!” Autarch Titanos exploded.

“Daolord Darknorth failed his Daomerge. He’ll probably die soon, leaving behind nothing more than a legend. Why would this be ‘big news’ to you, Master?” The azure-robed youth was completely puzzled. To him and the other Hegemons, this was a stunning piece of gossip, but in the end it was nothing more than that – gossip. He didn’t feel there was a need to bother the Autarch over it.

“For the love of...” Autarch Titanos felt helpless.

There were six Autarchs in total. One was permanently stationed in front of the Sithelands and thus didn't know of Ning. The other four were almost impossible for Hegemons to find, which was why they didn't know of Ning even though Ning's legend had long ago spread far and wide amongst the Hegemons and Emperors.

The only Autarch who was in fairly constant contact with the Hegemons and Emperors was Autarch Titanos, but he had been researching in seclusion and his subordinates didn't dare to disturb him. As a result, he didn't find out either. It wasn't until just a short while ago that the Autarchs found out about Ning, with Autarch Skyfeeder who was located within the Quintessence being the first to find out. She had notified the other Autarchs, and only then did they realize what had happened.

"...forget it." Autarch Titanos shook his head. "I've really embarrassed myself this time. I am usually the first to find out about things, but this time I was the last." As he spoke, he waved his hand and immediately warped through spacetime and departed.

He couldn't help but feel angry. The Autarchs had agreed long ago to a division of labor, and Autarch Titanos had agreed to be the one responsible for maintaining contact with the Hegemons and Emperors; he was to serve as a the bridge linking the Autarchs to the rest of civilization. If anything major happened amongst the Hegemons and Emperors, news of it would quickly make its way over to him, and he would then notify the others.

This time, the news involved the rise of someone who controlled the Eternal Omega Sword Dao. This was news of incredible importance... but he ended up being the notified party rather than the notifying party. Of course he felt humiliated by this!

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An empty, barren region. The stars and chaosworlds here seemed to have sunken into the silence of death. This entire region, which was the size of dozens of territories, was completely and utterly still. No life could rise here, nor would anyone dare to draw near here! If Hegemons did dare

to draw near this place, they would sense the terrifying power of death seep into their bodies... and if they came any closer, they would die.

And so, this region was in a perpetual state of death and silence.

There was an enormous planet here that was roughly a hundred billion kilometers in diameter. This entire planet was a dark gray color, and an incredibly dense aura of death surrounded the entire planet. This planet was the source of the deathly energy which pervaded this entire region, and even the stones here had been completely broken apart into countless grains of dark gray sand.

Rumble... the earth began to tremble, and the endless aura of death began to change. The ground slowly began to turn fertile and full of life. Soon, countless blades of green grass began to appear on the surface of the earth as the power of life began to emanate from this planet, and the aura of death that surrounded this region slowly began to dissipate.

Rain began to fall from the skies, resulting in rivers, lakes, and seas appearing. The earth began to change, with mountains and valleys taking shape. Vegetation began to grow rapidly, with prairies and forests appearing.

This transformation from utter death to brimming life happened in just a single breath's worth of time! In this single instant, time itself seemed to have somehow twisted. An incredibly long period of time seemed to have gone past, more than enough time to allow this place to become brimming with life.

Whoosh. A figure suddenly appeared on the surface of this planet. A sorrowful look was in his eyes, and he slowly shook his head. "I trained for very long this time. Why is it so difficult to gain insight into a Daobirth Essence from the line that separates life from death? If I mastered an additional Daobirth Essence, there would probably be a new transformation. Ugh. I failed yet again. Perhaps cultivators are only capable of mastering a single Daobirth Essence? Perhaps all the efforts of myself, Bolin, are for naught?"

"However... Skyfeeder just sent some good news. It seems our civilization

has finally given birth to someone in control of an Eternal Omega Dao. His name is Daolord Darknorth, eh? A pity, truly a pity... how wonderful would it be if he had succeeded in his Daomerge? Still, no matter what, at least he has mastered an Eternal Omega Dao.” He took a single step forwards, causing space to ripple around him, then vanished without a trace.

# Chapter 10: The Autarchs Gather

Within the sea of the prime essences of the Chaosverse. Inside the wooden cottage.

Ji Ning and Autarch Skyfeeder were seated in the lotus position. They were going to patiently wait for the other Autarchs before talking business. While waiting, Ning began to discuss the Dao and its myriad mysteries with Autarch Skyfeeder.

Over two hours went past in the blink of an eye.

“Haha...” A thunderous laugh rang out, followed by the door swinging open and a muscular man dressed in loose green robes walking in. He had a pair of curved horns on his head, and his eyes were like an endlessly dark abyss. He emanated an aura of terrifying pressure that caused Ning to feel shocked, and his palms were quite large and thick.

“Daolord Darknorth.” The muscular man smiled when he saw Ning.

“Darknorth, this would be Autarch Ekong,” Autarch Skyfeeder introduced with a smile. “He is the only Autarch who rose from our civilization after the Dawn War against the Sithe concluded. He was incredibly talented and rose to become a Hegemon in a very short period of time. He caused quite a stir in his youth, and he has a rather special title – he is known as the Autarch of Annihilation.”

“I’m actually a fairly nice guy and I rarely kill people, but my path was that of the Destruction Daobirth Essence. That’s why I’m known as the ‘Autarch of Annihilation’,” the muscular Autarch Ekong said with a booming laugh. “You can just call me Ekong.”

“Ekong, hurry up and sit down,” Autarch Skyfeeder said. “Sit and chat with us.”

“I can’t help it! I’m so happy to meet Daolord Darknorth. Our civilization has finally given birth to a master of an Eternal Omega Dao.” Autarch Ekong sat down.

Ning couldn’t help but secretly sigh in approval. Every Autarch truly was

an extraordinary figure. For example, Ning felt as though Autarch Skyfeeder was a transcendent figure that was quite unlike ordinary living beings; she was like the mother of all things who benevolently watched over all creation.

As for Autarch Ekong, he emanated a heroic aura that was tinged with a terrifying, all-encompassing dominance that whispered of a hidden potential for destruction.

“Ekong, you little drakeling! I can’t believe you actually got here faster than me.” The door swung open once more, followed by a bald, black-robed old man walking in with a smile on his face. The two fleshy antennae on his head twirled around, seemingly quite delighted.

“Old man, can you knock it off with the ‘little drakeling’ thing? Just because you started training a bit earlier than me...” Autarch Ekong said helplessly.

“It’s your own fault for calling me ‘old man’.” Autarch Titanos gave him a ‘hard’ look, then turned and beamed at Ning. “Darknorth, my young friend... we meet again.”

“Respectful greetings, Autarch Titanos.” Ning smiled.

“You’ve met?” Autarch Skyfeeder and Autarch Ekong were both surprised. Autarchs were quite hard to meet, and Ning had only trained for a fairly brief period of time. They had thought that Ning had never met with any Autarchs before.

“Yes indeed. My young friend Darknorth once asked me to help him reverse spacetime to revive his Dao-companion.” Autarch Titanos let out a sigh. “Alas... the chaosworld his Dao-companion resided within was a world that was created from the godgems left behind by ol’ Awakener after he died. In fact, it was a world created from TWO godgems that collided together. I’d probably kill myself trying to bring her back to life, and it still probably wouldn’t work.”

Skyfeeder and Ekong were both startled. As for Ning, he fell silent for a moment before letting out a chuckle: “What’s past is past.”

“Come, let me offer you a toast.” Ekong lifted up his wine cup. “I’ve had quite a few Dao-companions in the past and thus have experienced the travails involved in reversing spacetime to bring them back. Thankfully, my Dao-companions resided in a mundane chaosworld, making reviving them much easier. I was a bit luckier than you, I suppose. Let’s drink together.”

Ning lifted up his own cup and drank some of the wine.

“I didn’t expect that you would actually have a connection to Awakener, Darknorth.” Autarch Skyfeeder let out a sigh. “Awakener was tremendously talented and was actually one of the first Autarchs to rise to power. The only one remaining from the oldest days is you, old man Titanos.”

“That’s because I’m not tired of living yet!” Autarch Titanos stared at her. “But you, Skyfeeder... you’ve trained for a shorter period of time than me. Are you thinking of taking the same route which Awakener and Entropos took?”

“There are no other paths to take. That was the same conclusion they came to. However... thankfully, our civilization has finally given birth to someone like Daolord Darknorth, a master of an Eternal Omega Dao. As a result, I can relax a bit and won’t rush off to give it a try.” Autarch Skyfeeder smiled as she glanced at Ning.

Ning couldn’t help but ask, “Awakener and ‘Entropos’; who were they?”

“Two other old fellows,” Autarch Titanos chortled. “The three of us were the originals, the ones who lived the longest – Entropos, Awakener, and myself! A great deal of time passed before Skyfeeder and the others made their breakthroughs. Alas, Awakener and Entropos have already died.”

“Both of them died? How did they die?” Ning couldn’t help but ask.

Autarch Titanos, Autarch Skyfeeder, and Autarch Ekong exchanged a glance. Autarch Titanos then let out a chuckle and said, “Darknorth, my young friend, don’t be impatient. We’ll discuss this matter later, and I’m sure you’ll come to understand. This actually is connected to the reason why we need your help. Let’s wait for the other two to arrive. Actually...

hah! They've already arrived."

Ning and the others all turned to look towards the outside. The seams between the wooden logs were quite large, allowing one to clearly see what was going on outside. Right now, two figures were walking side-by-side towards the cottage. These were the two remaining Autarchs of the five who were meeting today.

The eight Domain Rulers and the Flamewing God continued to wait outside in the courtyard, their eyes growing wider and wider. "They just keep coming..." they mumbled breathlessly.

Every single person who came was an Autarch. Each time, the nine could sense that invisible aura of might and pressure. Even the normally brash Flamewing was now on his absolute best behavior.

"Two more Autarchs?" Flamewing and the others all stared as two figures emerged from the sea of prime essences and walked into the courtyard. The two glanced at the eight Domain Rulers and Flamewing but didn't say a word, simply walking straight inside the cottage.

"Five Autarchs." Flamewing muttered to itself, "What do these five Autarchs want from my master?"

"I've been alive for an eternity, but I've never seen five Autarchs together."

"Even I have only seen three of them."

"Five Autarchs have gathered together. How rare must this be?!" The eight Domain Rulers were all speechless. Autarchs were incredibly hard to find; even during the Dawn War against the Sithe, the Autarchs had commanded separate troops of Hegemons. Some of the eight Domain Rulers had taken part in this war, but none of them had seen all of the Autarchs.

All eight of the Domain Rulers and Flamewing stared towards that wooden cottage with curiosity. That ordinary looking cottage actually held five Autarchs and a Daolord who was the first person in the Chaosverse to master an Eternal Omega Dao. All nine of them were curious... what was

being discussed inside?

Inside the room. The two final Autarchs walked in alongside each other, and Ning couldn't help but smile when he saw them. Compared to Autarch Ekong or Autarch Titanos, Ning could be considered quite handsome. Even Autarch Skyfeeder wasn't all that attractive... but the final two Autarchs who had just arrived were both ravishingly handsome men of empire-toppling beauty. Ning could use every single superlative in his vocabulary to describe their appearance, and it would all be completely justified.

The one on the left had white hair. He had a rather tired aura and his face was unshaven, but he was without a doubt a truly handsome man. He seemed to be walking the line between life and death; he seemed like the font of all life, but he also seemed like the final resting place of the dead. All living creatures would feel an uncontrollable sense of yearning towards him... but of course, major powers like Ning wouldn't be affected.

As for the one on the right, he was an incomparably noble figure. He had black hair, bore a smile on his face, and seemed to be a truly perfect person. Even someone whose Dao-heart was incredibly strong like Ning couldn't help but feel somewhat attracted to this man, who seemed to embody the very essence of beauty itself.

"This is Bolin." Autarch Titanos pointed at the tired-looking white-haired man, then smiled: "This fellow has been ruminating on life and death, or something like that. That's why he looks so terrible. When I first met him, he was quite a dashing and imposing figure. He's the master of the Claw Daobirth Essence, but now he looks like this... tsk!"

"Eh?" Autarch Bolin looked at Ning, rather startled. "The two of us are actually connected by karma?"

"There is indeed some karma between us," Ning said with a laugh. "Autarch Bolin... you don't know me, but I actually benefited through your actions. That Chaos Primordial outside? I actually tamed it due to the verdant azuresoul you left behind in one of your beastworlds, Autarch."

"Oh?" A hint of a smile appeared on Autarch Bolin's face. "Yes, long ago

I did in fact leave behind quite a few estate-worlds throughout the Chaosverse. I was worried that we would lose the final battle and wanted to ensure that the seeds of rebirth and resistance would be planted for our civilization. However, we ended up winning, making the estate-worlds of limited use. I stopped paying attention to them as a result. I didn't expect that they would end up helping you out, Daolord Darknorth. It seems my work wasn't wasted after all."

Ning felt a sense of tremendous admiration for Autarch Bolin. Autarch Bolin clearly walked the path of the Claw Daobirth Essence, but he had reached such incredible heights in the Dao of Life that he had been able to create an entire race... the race of Aeonians!

# Chapter 11: The Source Of Everything

Ji Ning had just heard Autarch Titanos say that Autarch Bolin was studying the secrets of life and death, which was why his aura had changed so dramatically. Based on this, Ning surmised that the Aeonians probably represented certain accomplishments Autarch Bolin had reached in understanding the mysteries of life. What, then, were his accomplishments in the mysteries of death? And... why was an Autarch even researching the principles of life and death?

“And this gentleman is Stonerule.” Autarch Bolin pointed at the perfectly beautiful man next to him and chuckled, “Stonerule become an Autarch via the Dao of Illusions. His divine body is filled with boundless magnetism and charm. Those of us who have perfect Dao-hearts aren’t affected too much, but Hegemons and Otherverse Lords who run into him would be instantly charmed and would willingly do whatever he commanded.”

“Illusions?” Ning was shocked. So Autarch Stonerule’s path was that of the Illusion Daobirth Essence? How impressive!

“Respectful greetings, Daolord Darknorth.” Autarch Stonerule smiled. “My little parlor tricks are nothing to you, Daolord. We have been waiting a long, long time for someone to finally master an Eternal Omega Dao, but we never knew when it would finally occur! Very few can even become Daolords of the Fourth Step through an Omega Dao, while the Daomerge for one would be even more incomparably difficult!”

“It truly was hard.” Ning nodded.

“Although you failed, Daolord, you still managed to master an Eternal Omega Dao. This truly is a blessing for our civilization,” Autarch Stonerule said.

“All of you, sit down. Look at how antsy you all are,” Autarch Skyfeeder said.

Autarch Bolin and Autarch Stonerule immediately sat down. Now, all five Autarchs and Ning were all seated. Ning felt a sense of anticipation.

He knew that it was finally time to discuss business.

“Shall I go first?” Autarch Titanos swept the others with a glance.

“Go ahead, old man,” Autarch Ekong said. The other Autarchs all nodded.

Autarch Titanos looked straight at Ning. “Darknorth, by now you should be aware that the Sithe have not been truly exterminated, right?”

“They haven’t been truly exterminated?” Ning was astonished.

“You didn’t know?” Autarch Titanos was rather surprised. “Haven’t you visited the legendary Sithelands?”

“I’ve heard of the Sithelands but haven’t visited them yet,” Ning said. The Sithelands were indeed quite famous. Ning had heard Emperor Waveshift speak of them and had discussed them with several major powers. The Sithe had arisen from that place, and to this very day it held more Sithe treasures than any other place. Major powers often went there to go adventuring.

“Weren’t the Sithe exterminated after losing the war?” Ning asked.

Autarch Titanos chuckled. “I would’ve assumed that after you failed the Daomerge, you would’ve gone to visit as many of the famous places in the Chaosverse as you could prior to dying. I thought you visited the Sithelands already. If you had... given your current level of insight, you probably would’ve seen the truth. You would’ve understood that the Sithe are not truly extinct. Rather, we’ve completely sealed them away, making it impossible for them to return once more.”

Ning continued to listen attentively.

“Long ago,” Autarch Titanos said, “The vast Chaosverse arose, giving birth to countless living beings. Slowly, some embarked upon the path of cultivation. Entropos was the first Autarch, and he was followed by Awakener, then by myself. Next came Autarch Skyfeeder, Autarch Bolin, Autarch Stonerule, and Autarch Mogg.”

“Back then, we lived without any worries or concerns. Entropos died

trying to take the final step, but that didn't matter; everyone was seeking their own paths, after all. But then... all of a sudden, and without any warning, the Sithe emerged.

"The Sithe were both mysterious and powerful. The prime essences of the Chaosverse sent us a warning, ensuring that we could subconsciously sense that the Sithe posed an enormous threat to us," Autarch Titanos said. "Have you seen any Sithe Exalts yet?"

"I have." Ning's eyes lit up and he immediately said, "I saw the Sithe Exalt imprisoned in the Earthfire Continent. If I'm not mistaken... that Sithe Exalt had the insights of an Autarch. Logically speaking, he should've been an Autarch... but his actual power level was far lower. He was probably just on par with the Domain Rulers outside this cottage."

Autarch Titanos nodded. "Yes. They are Autarchs."

Ning was stunned. "They really are Autarchs? B-but their power..."

"They aren't Autarchs from this place," Autarch Titanos said. "Although our Chaosverse is almost infinitely vast... outside the Chaosverse there is a truly infinite and endless region which has other living creatures within it. The Sithe race stems from another Chaosverse located within the Infinite Void!"

"A different Chaosverse?!" Ning had yet to even leave this Chaosverse.

"Once we became Autarchs, we were able to glean some secrets from the prime essences of the Chaosverse," Autarch Titanos said. "The vast and endless void is filled with a number of enormous celestial bodies, with the largest being the Chaosverses! But even in the Infinite Void, Chaosverses are incredibly rare and few in number. The most powerful and most invincible of all beings in the Infinite Void are the Lords of Chaos, the controllers of the Chaosverses!"

"If you wish to become a Lord of Chaos and master a Chaosverse, you must first become an Autarch! Then, you must master and bind the entire Quintessence of that Chaosverse, which would give you full control over all the power that Chaosverse has." Autarch Titanos looked at Ning. "You should understand by now how much strength would be needed to take

full control over the power of the Chaosverse.”

Ning was stunned. Of course he knew! The power hidden within the vast Wellspring Seas of the Eight Domains was already vastly beyond the power which Autarchs could command. The power of the entire Chaosverse? That would be insanely, indescribably vast. Taking control over all of it was completely inconceivable.

“The Sithe come from a different Chaosverse which already has a supremely exalted Lord of Chaos controlling it! This was why their civilization has reached such incredible heights, and why they have so many marvelous techniques at their disposal,” Autarch Titanos said. “But because their Chaosverse already has a person in control of it, there’s no way for a second Chaoslord to arise... and so they have invaded our Chaosverse and seek to dominate it instead!”

“But they are foreign invaders, while this is our home. Here, they will suffer invisible pressure which ensures that they aren’t able to gain any additional power from the Dao here. Even their Autarchs are weakened by this invisible pressure. Without the power of the Dao supporting them, they are naturally much weaker than they should be,” Autarch Titanos said.

“They are completely different races from us, because they were born in a completely different Chaosverse... but once they are able to take control over our Chaosverse, they can transform it and make it suitable for them. As for those of us who were born here? All of us will perish! From that day forth, all creatures born from our Chaosverse shall be like them – Sithe.” Autarch Titanos looked at Ning. “This is literally a war of survival. We cannot shirk our duty.”

Ning asked, “So the enemy Lord of Chaos is afraid to come here?”

“He wouldn’t dare.” Autarch Titanos explained, “The wellspring of his power is his Chaosverse! He’s able to make use of that power anywhere in the Infinite Void, which is why he is invincible. But... if he was to enter our Chaosverse, he would lose access to that power and would be suppressed, just like everyone else. That’s why he wouldn’t dare to enter himself.”

Ning nodded.

“And besides... why would he? He already stands at the very peak of power in all the Infinite Void, capable of accomplishing anything he desires.” Autarch Titanos sighed. “Alas, the other creatures within his Chaosverse wish to become Lords of Chaos as well. Their only choice is to leave their Chaosverse and invade other ones... and so, we ended up becoming a target for them.”

“We’ve already killed sixteen Sithe Exalts and trapped six of them. There are probably other Exalts sealed away within the Sithelands as well. In other words... tens of ‘Autarchs’ from their Chaosverse have invaded ours. From this, you should be able to tell the difference in power between them and us.”

Ning nodded. The difference was clear, obvious, and enormous.

“They surpass us in many ways, such as in fashioning treasures and techniques,” Autarch Titanos said. “We were able to suppress them during the war thanks to our geographical advantage and managed to lock them away into their ‘homelands’, making it impossible for them to invade us again... but in the end, they will always pose a threat. Even worse, if enough time passes we might be invaded by other civilizations as well!”

“Thus... the only way to forever get rid of all these problems is to produce a Lord of Chaos ourselves!” Autarch Titanos said. “If we can take control over our own Chaosverse, then we’ll be able to make full use of its power. When that happens we would have the power to invade others, but no one would dare to invade us.”

Ning agreed with this assessment. Their Chaosverse was without a ruler, but they had still managed to fight back for so long. Once they did gain a Chaoslord, then they would become truly invincible.

“Alas, taking control over the Chaosverse is simply too hard.” Autarch Titanos shook his head. “Entropos gave it a try, but he died. Awakener also tried, but he also died.”

# Chapter 12: Help

“The power of the Chaosverse is too overwhelmingly mighty. Although we were born from this Chaosverse and thus the prime essences do not reject us, we still cannot withstand their incredible might.” Autarch Titanos sighed. “Trying to accomplish this task through raw force simply results in us imploding under the weight of the Chaosverse’s power. It’s sheer suicide! Entropos and Awakener were both extremely powerful, but neither of them were able to endure the weight of that power. Before they died, they sent us messages to never try it again; the difference was simply too great.”

The other four Autarchs all fell silent, while Ning himself nodded slowly. It was like death through over-eating. Sometimes, accepting an excessively heavy burden would result in you being crushed to death by it! Even the most powerful figures in the Chaosverse, the Autarchs, were unable to withstand even the minimum pressure required to take control over the full power of the Chaosverse. This must have been why the estate-spirit of the Azureflower Estate had stated that Autarch Awakener had essentially committed suicide.

“But we had no other choices available to us,” Autarch Titanos said. “This is the only method we had available for ensuring the perpetual security of our Chaosverse. There really are no other options available to us. That’s why Skyfeeder was planning to make the attempt as well.”

“I’ve spent an incredibly long period of time training in the Quintessence,” Autarch Skyfeeder said. “I’ve tried a few low-level mock-bindings. I think I have a shot.”

“Awakener and Entropos both felt the same way.” Autarch Titanos shook his head.

“That’s the allure of it all.” Autarch Ekong chuckled. “Stop playing the fool. There’s ALWAYS a ‘shot’, but we’d probably all die chasing after that flitting chance. Now that we have Darknorth, our civilization has a real shot. There’s no need for us to foolishly go off and commit suicide.”

Puzzled, Ning asked, “Are there really no other options? Is becoming a Lord of Chaos truly the only path which is available to us? If we’ve already defeated the Sithe and sealed them away, why don’t we just kick them all out?”

“If we could kick them out, we would’ve done so long ago.” Autarch Bolin chuckled softly.

“We’re not able to do that,” Autarch Stonerule said.

Autarch Skyfeeder smiled and explained, “Daolord Darknorth, as you know the Sithe have incredibly powerful weapons at their disposal. The deeper you go into their ‘homeland’, the stronger their defenses become and the more powerful their weapons are! Their homeland is the most dangerous place in all the Chaosverse. During the Dawn War, what we did was to attack their bases throughout the Chaosverse. We didn’t fight them in their lair!”

“We had a geographical advantage when fighting in the other parts of the Chaosverse. The Sithe were confident in their chances at first, and if they wished to bind the Quintessence they would have to kill us all,” Autarch Skyfeeder explained. “That is why they came out of their main base and fought against us throughout the Chaosverse. In the end, we won an extremely narrow victory.”

“If they wish to bind the Quintessence, they must kill you all first?” Ning didn’t fully understand.

Autarch Titanos nodded. “Correct.”

“Early on, during the first days of the Chaosverse, there were actually extremely few living beings. Later on, life began to flourish. More and more living beings came into existence... but there’s a limit to how much energy the Chaosverse has! Cultivators learned to take in the power of the Chaosverse for themselves, becoming more powerful. By now, I estimate that the majority of the power of the Chaosverse has actually been concentrated within the bodies of the countless cultivators currently alive.”

“Thus, when cultivators die and their truesouls collapse, all that energy

shall return to the Quintessence or the local everworlds and otherverses. However... the Sithe knew a way to kill us and then take away our true soul energy!" Autarch Titanos continued, "The more of us they killed, the weaker our entire Chaosverse became. If it loses enough power, the Quintessence itself will become so weak that even foreign outsiders like the Sithe will be capable of binding it."

Ning finally understood. As in all other areas, the Sithe undoubtedly had binding techniques that far surpassed what the local cultivator civilizations possessed! However, they were still outsiders; they would be suppressed and rejected by this Chaosverse. They had to first weaken it and bleed it before they would stand a chance at success.

"The most powerful creatures in our entire Chaosverse are the Autarchs. Us. If they can kill even a single Autarch, it would be considered a great success." Autarch Titanos chuckled. "A pity for them that killing us is extremely difficult. Below us are the Hegemons, and the Sithe are quite happy to kill them as well. What they needed was slaughter on a vast scale, and in order to achieve that they had to come out from their main lair and attack us throughout the Chaosverse. Otherwise, they wouldn't have been able to achieve their aims."

"In the end, we won. However, during our final assault against the Sithelands, we were only able to take control over their outer perimeter. We could sense that tremendous danger lay hidden at the center of their lair, and we could subconsciously sense that if we dared to attack, we could very well perish. Thus, we decided to instead seal them away and ensure that they cannot come out," Autarch Titanos said.

"Since their goal was to weaken our Chaosverse, we naturally had to come up with a way to replenish it and strengthen the Quintessence. We chose to use the imprisoned Sithe Exalts for that task. The 'torture' those Sithe Exalts are enduring is actually serving to slowly assimilate them in order to replenish the energies of the Chaosverse. The goal is to cause them to break down, at which point we would assimilate every scrap of their power. Since their power originally came from outside our Chaosverse, this will allow the total amount of energy belonging to our

Chaosverse to grow,” Autarch Titanos explained. “This was a clumsy method, but the only one we had.”

Autarch Ekong smirked. “Unfortunately, it hasn’t really worked at all. Those six imprisoned Sithe Exalts have been resisting our efforts. They’ve been tormented for ages, but their Dao-hearts have yet to crumble and they remain in control of their energies.”

“Sooner or later, they’ll give up. Once they do so, they’ll be assimilated and their energies shall be taken away,” Autarch Titanos said.

Puzzled, Ning said, “During the war, we killed many Sithe Exalts. Were we unable to draw from the truesoul energies of those slain Exalts?”

“Wouldn’t work.” Autarch Ekong laughed, “Things aren’t going to be that easy! Long ago, the Sithe set wards over their truesouls. As soon as they die, their energies will depart from our Chaosverse and return to their own. That’s why we had to imprison those six Sithe Exalts.”

“Thus... our civilization is actually in dire straits,” Autarch Titanos said. “All of us are doing our best to try and solve this problem, because we fear that one day an outside power will take control over our Chaosverse and terraform it to become more hospitable to them, resulting in our complete extermination.”

Ning finally understood. In the past, Ning was without any real worries or concerns; he felt that if there were any existential problems, it would be up to the Autarchs to handle them. There was no need for him to concern himself. But now that he stood amongst the ranks of the Autarchs, he finally understood just how dangerous a situation the Chaosverse was in!

How much longer would the cultivator civilizations be able to last? A few million more chaos cycles? A few billion? Longer? But if they were unable to produce a true Lord of Chaos, then in the end they would still face extinction. Even if they weren’t destroyed by the Sithe, they would be destroyed by other outside civilizations.

“Going against the laws of the Chaosverse is actually causing harm to the prime essences, which is why we rarely reverse spacetime to revive people.” Autarch Titanos sighed. “Your deceased Dao-companion is a good

example. Her true soul contained just the tiniest of smidgeons of Autarch Awakener's power; reversing spacetime to revive her really wouldn't cause any harm to the prime essences at all. And yet, the prime essences would fight back with all their might to resist it! This is because they innately wish to stay in peak condition, for fear that outside forces will take control over them."

Ning nodded slowly.

"Haha. Thankfully, the situation isn't critical just yet," Autarch Ekong said with a laugh. "Although there might be more enemies in the future, for now we only have to face the Sithe! We've sealed away their homeland, giving us the upper hand!"

"Don't celebrate just yet," Autarch Titanos said calmly. "The Sithe have been dormant for far too long. They might receive reinforcements from outside and become even more powerful."

"But we have Darknorth." Autarch Ekong continued to smile happily. He was the only Autarch who had risen to power after the Dawn War had concluded. As a result, he was the most confident of the five.

"Darknorth." Autarch Titanos laughed in a relaxed manner. "Five of the six Autarchs have all gathered here today. Mogg is the only one absent, and that is because he is permanently stationed to stand guard over the Sithelands and keep an eye on it. This is because there is something we need from you, something that involves the survival of our entire civilization."

"Yes." The other four Autarchs all looked at Ning.

"Pray tell." Ning nodded. Now that he knew what a dangerous situation his civilization was in, he naturally wouldn't shirk his duty. As someone who now stood at the very apex of power, he had to help the Autarchs as best he could. As the saying goes, 'when the skies collapse, let the big guys handle it'; Ning was now one of the 'big guys'!

"Only when our civilization gives rise to a Lord of Chaos shall we be truly and perpetually safe." Autarch Titanos looked at Ning. "But taking control over the full power of the Chaosverse is very, very difficult. We

stand no chance at all. There is, however, one path that is certain to succeed. That path is... using an Omega Dao to become an Autarch!”

# Chapter 13: What Do You Desire?

“You are on par with us in power. If you became an Autarch through an Omega Dao, you would probably become far, far more powerful than the rest of us, and far more powerful than Entropos and Awakener were. Awakener, Entropos, Skyfeeder... all of them sensed that they had a chance. An Omega Autarch would probably be able to easily annihilate the entire Sithelands with ease! If you also had control over the full power of the Chaosverse, you would become completely invincible.” Autarch Titanos looked at Ning. “And that is what we need your help for.”

“Me? But... I’ve already failed my Daomerge,” Ning said.

“Ah, but you’ve mastered an Eternal Omega Dao,” Autarch Skyfeeder said.

“With your Eternal Omega Dao, I feel confident that our civilization will soon give birth to a true Omega Emperor! There are no lethal pitfalls between the ‘Emperor’ stage and the ‘Autarch’ stage, which means that given enough time that person would have a chance. Even if he remained at the ‘Emperor’ stage, he would still be on par with the five of us in power.” Autarch Titanos said eagerly, “In the past, we’ve actually worked to hide the existence of the Omega Daos, preventing word of them from spreading. This was because this path was so difficult, we were afraid that many of our most talented geniuses would die when attempting to trod it.”

“Consider many of the current Hegemons. Imagine if they had known of the existence of Omega Daos when they were at the World level, and even had techniques to guide them! Given their talent and given enough time, many of them would stand a good chance in embarking upon the path of the Omega Dao... but what would the end result be? They would fail the Daomerge, then die!”

“Your chances at the Daomerge are much better if you train by yourself, rather than receive fragmented guidance from others. Those who are good enough to blaze a trail for themselves stand the best chances of all,” Autarch Titanos said.

Ning agreed with this assessment. When you had no guidance, cultivation would be extremely difficult... but as a result, those who nonetheless succeeded were generally possessed of incredible comprehension abilities! The Three Realms was a good example of this. They originally had no legacies or techniques to guide them, making it hard for them to even reach the World level... but those who succeeded were all truly incredible figures!

This was doubly true for the Omega Daos. If you were given guidance, you might be able to embark upon a path you would never have been able to discover on your own... but in the end you would still fail before the Daomerge.

Those who were able to embark upon this path on their own would naturally be blessed with tremendous talent and insight! In all the Chaosverse, only a pitiful handful of people were able to even reach the Fourth Step of an Omega Dao. Every single such person was an incredible genius, and they had a good chance at the Daomerge. Even though they all failed, it merely represented a fairly small loss of life; it wouldn't have much of an impact on the Chaosverse as a whole. But if cultivators began to train in the Omega Dao on a wide scale? Many geniuses would perish on this path, resulting in the Chaosverse having fewer experts and becoming weaker as a whole.

"But now, things are different!" Autarch Titanos said. "Now that we have an Eternal Omega Dao, we have a complete path which future cultivators can follow."

"That means we can now truly publicize the existence of the Omega Daos, allowing many cultivators to embark upon this path at the World level. With your Daomerge experiences guiding the way, they won't make any unnecessary mistakes. Their chances at success will instantly increase a hundredfold or more!" Autarch Titanos explained.

Ning sighed. If a senior had blazed a path for him and let him know what was needed, he himself probably would've succeeded. Now that he had become the trailblazer, future cultivators would have a clear understanding of what they needed to do. With enough experience and

enough preparation, they would stand a far better chance than cultivators did in the past.

“We need your help,” Autarch Titanos said solemnly. “We would like to ask you to entrust your Eternal Omega Dao to us. We will then impart it to the juniors who have become Daolords of the Fourth Step in an Omega Dao... but of course, we’ll also ask them to swear lifeblood oaths to enter your school and become known as the honorary disciples of Daolord Darknorth.”

“Darknorth.” Autarch Bolin, Autarch Skyfeeder, Autarch Stonerule, Autarch Ekong, and Autarch Titanos all looked at Ning, hoping to hear his answer. However... they also knew that cultivators guarded their supreme techniques with extreme jealousy, treating them as their babies.

Ning had experienced so many setbacks and sorrows. He had experienced countless dangers and seen many things before finally managing to devise his [Eternal Omega Sword Dao], his most supreme technique. Any major power would feel a tremendous sense of attachment to a supreme technique like this! They had sacrificed far, far too much for the sake of their Daos; it could be said that they had poured their entire lives into their Daos.

This is why there was a saying that ‘the Dao is not to be transmitted lightly’. The five of them were asking for Ning to just give his Dao to them in all of its entirety, allowing every single Fourth Step Omega Daolord to train in it!

“...Very well.” Ning nodded, and looks of delight instantly appeared on the faces of the five Autarchs.

“Thank you, Darknorth.”

“The cultivator civilizations will never forget you.” All of them were tremendously excited. They were afraid that Ning would be stubborn and selfish. If he refused to transmit his Dao to them, there would be nothing they could do.

Ning smiled. “Autarch Awakener and the others have all sacrificed their lives for this, and Autarch Mogg has sworn to eternally stand guard over

the Sithelands. I, Ji Ning, have nothing of value to offer; the only thing I have is my Eternal Omega Dao. How can I complain about offering it up? However, I do want to add in a rule; it is not to be transmitted to those who are wicked of heart.”

“There’s no need to worry about that,” Autarch Titanos said hurriedly. “What we’re trying to do is produce a Lord of Chaos who will be in charge of our Chaosverse. How could we possibly dare to let an evil person take that role? He could well become a calamity unto all of civilization!”

“The only reason we even allow those evil cultivators to exist is to ensure that the cultivator civilizations remain in a state of constant combat, which helps to temper cultivators and allow for more powerful cultivators to arise. If it wasn’t for that, I personally would’ve wiped out many of the vilest cultivators long ago,” Autarch Skyfeeder said coldly. By her very nature, she was someone who felt extreme hatred for evildoers.

Ning nodded.

“Haha... now that you’ve agreed, Darknorth, things will be simple.” Autarch Titanos beamed merrily.

“We’ll immediately send word throughout the Chaosverse of the existence of Omega Daos. We’ll even give copies of the various Fourth Step Omega Dao techniques we already possess to the Hegemons of the various realmverses and let them impart them to those they favor.” Autarch Ekong smiled. “We have quite a few Fourth Step Omega Dao techniques. Once one of them becomes a Daolord of the Fourth Step, we’ll transmit your Eternal Omega Dao to them, Darknorth.”

“Very well. I’ll immediately record a copy and also include all the many experiences I had and insights I gained during the Daomerge process,” Ning said.

“Darknorth.” Autarch Bolin looked at Ning. “In doing this, you will have contributed far more to this Chaosverse than any of us ever have. Tell me, is there anything you need? We’ll do whatever we can to help you.”

“Yes, what do you desire?” Autarch Titanos and the others all looked at Ning. They knew that Ning had already failed his Daomerge and wouldn’t

have much time left to live. Most likely, he had certain things he wished to ensure were taken care of.

Ning was briefly startled by this. “My greatest desire...” Ning’s mind instantly became filled with images of his homeland, of his wife Yu Wei.

His homeland was the place he cared the most about, a source of warmth... while his wife, Yu Wei, was the person he would never be able to forget about.

“Unfortunately, we aren’t able to reverse spacetime to revive your Dao-companion.” Autarch Titanos let out a sigh.

Ning chuckled. “There is one thing that worries me... the safety of my homeland! But I’ve already sent Nuwa to stand guard over it. If something truly dangerous happens, I’ll have Nuwa ask you to help out, Autarchs.”

“A minor matter.”

“That’s a miniscule request.” The five Autarchs all felt that this was very simple.

“There IS one more thing, but it’ll be a bit trickier,” Ning said. “My homeland is located within the Flamedragon Realmverse! Thus, I don’t wish to see the Flamedragon Realmverse be destroyed. The Terror Starsea is close to the Flamedragon Realmverse, and it has a slowly-growing pair of Yin-Yang Samsara Wheels. I’m fairly strong, but I can’t last too long in combat; if I tried to destroy the Yin-Yang Samsara Wheels, I’d probably die in the attempt due to my truesoul collapsing. Thus, I would like to ask you to help destroy the Yin-Yang Samsara Wheels.”

“I’ll handle this one,” Autarch Titanos said immediately. Although destroying the Yin-Yang Samsara Wheels would be rather taxing even for the Autarchs, it still wasn’t an excessively major request.

Of course, they normally wouldn’t intervene in this manner as they would allow the Chaosverse to develop in its own natural manner! There was no point in them exerting so much effort for something of little benefit... but now that Ning had made the request, they immediately accepted.

“Anything else? These are all simple tasks.” Autarch Titanos smiled. “To be honest, the five of us feel like we have wronged you and owe you a tremendous debt. You have blazed a trail for us and brought hope to our Chaosverse, after all.”

“I really can’t think of anything else for now,” Ning said with a laugh.

His greatest desire was to revive his wife. If he could somehow manage to reach Autarchy with his Omega Dao before his truesoul disintegrated, he’d probably be able to avoid dying... but that was nothing but a foolish dream! The Autarchs weren’t capable of reviving his wife, while Ning himself didn’t have enough time. There was no way he could upgrade his Omega Dao to Autarchy.

“I heard that you were searching for Nuwa,” Autarch Skyfeeder said suddenly. “You’ve now arranged for her to safeguard your homeland. The more powerful she is, the more effective she will be in this task. Based on what I know, she hasn’t become an Otherverse Lord yet, right? There are some unbound otherverses within the Eight Domains. I’ll gift one to Nuwa and let her become an Otherverse Lord.”

# Chapter 14: A Perfect Technique

“Thank you, Autarch Skyfeeder.” Ji Ning revealed a delighted look. Finding an ownerless otherverse was no easy task, but it was quite simple for Autarchs because they were the creators of the otherverses.

“Darknorth.” The calm and stoic Autarch Bolin said, “You failed the Daomerge, resulting in your truesoul crumbling away. I have a treasure that can help fortify and stabilize your truesoul, ensuring that the crumbling speed is somewhat slowed down!” Autarch bolin waved his hand, causing a palm-sized white disc to appear in front of him. This white disc was covered with two golden runes that emanated mysterious ripples of power which caused Ning’s truesoul to feel very comfortable. Just as Ning was sighing in amazement, it flew into his hands.

“With this treasure, I should be able to live 30% longer than I originally anticipated.” Ning didn’t decline, immediately accepting it into his body.

“I have one as well. It might not be as good as Bolin’s, but it should still be of help to you,” Autarch Skyfeeder said immediately.

“Me too,” Autarch Titanos said with a smile.

“I can give you one of these toys as well.” All five Autarchs took out a variety items for Ning. Some were unique Sithe treasures, while others were naturally formed curios that were born from the primordial chaos. All of them were beneficial to the soul and the truesoul. In truth, the Autarchs really didn’t care about treasures like these, because they had truly infinite lifespans; why would they even need these things? They only thought of them after Autarch Bolin raised the subject.

Ning didn’t decline any of the offers. All of the treasures served to firm up the soul and truesoul, but of course using multiple treasures resulted in diminishing returns. All combined, these treasures would slow down his truesoul’s disintegration by nearly half. He would most likely be able to live roughly 60% longer than he had originally anticipated! But of course, if he had to engage in fierce combat then his truesoul’s disintegration would be hastened dramatically.

“Unfortunately, our civilization is far weaker than the Sithe civilization,” Autarch Titanos said with a sigh. “The Sithe have far more profound techniques, and they don’t even differentiate between ‘divine power’ or ‘Immortal energy’. They’ve perfectly merged everything into one type of energy, and their Daolords don’t even face any mortal danger during the Daomerge.”

“Their World-level cultivators become Daolords, their Daolords become Emperors, and their Emperors become Autarchs! None of them face any mortal danger during each step of the process. This is a truly perfect cultivation system they have,” Autarch Titanos said. “Our civilization, however, only has access to cruder techniques. Daolords tread the line between life and death with each step they take. The first four steps aren’t so bad, but the Daomerge is the greatest obstacle all of us face.”

“No danger at all?” Ning was shocked. He knew that the Sithe followed a completely different path of cultivation that was akin to the azureflower mist energy, which Autarch Awakener had created based on his research into the Sithe.

“Correct,” Autarch Skyfeeder agreed. “At the Daolord level, they can make repeated mistakes but still try again. Even if they fail the Daomerge, their truesoul will not disintegrate; they can try the Daomerge a thousand times if they so choose. Their only limitation is that there is a limit to their lifespan; if they cannot succeed before their lifespan comes to an end, they will die.”

“What?!” Ning immediately asked, “Have any of you received the Sithe training techniques?”

“We have. Many of them, in fact.” Autarch Titanos shook his head. “But it is useless. They are completely different types of lifeforms who were birthed from a completely different Chaosverse. There’s no way for us to use their cultivation techniques at all! We tried to make use of them long ago, and Awakener poured his heart into researching them, but to no avail. This was his greatest regret when he died.”

Ning couldn’t help but ask, “Can you give me those Sithe techniques and

let me take a look?”

“Absolutely.”

“I have plenty as well.”

“Take a look, Darknorth.” The five Autarchs knew what Ning was thinking. The Sithe cultivation techniques were truly perfect, ensuring that there were no fatal obstacles at any stage of cultivation. In truth, this wasn’t all that surprising. There were no fatal obstacles for World level cultivators seeking to become Daolords, nor were there any obstacles for Emperors seeking to become Autarchs. Why, then, was it so difficult for Daolords to become Emperors? It was precisely because of existing flaws with their cultivation techniques!

The five Autarchs immediately handed over storage-type treasures to Ning, each of which was filled with many jade slips.

“None of these techniques are suitable for us cultivators to train in,” Autarch Titanos said. “You would have to retrofit them in order to make use of them. Some technical techniques are usable, but the cultivation techniques are completely unusable.”

“Let me take a look first.” After acquiring all these jade slips, Ning waved his hand and caused one to appear at random, which he immediately began to read.

The jade slip was filled with the Sithe language. The Sithe script was actually quite similar to the script used to write the words ‘Crimson’ ‘Wave’ ‘Temple’, and they also seemed similar to the azureflower seal-script within the Azureflower Estate. This was an extremely profound and abstruse language. The language alone was a testament to how much more advanced the Sithe were compared to local cultivators. This was why a mere Sithe incursion force had such an enormous number of Exalts within it!

Thankfully, the Autarchs and the local cultivators had the advantage of geography. The invading Exalts were unable to manifest the power of the Dao and were constantly suppressed by the prime essences of this Chaosverse, ensuring that they were ‘merely’ at the power of the Blazesun

Ruler. This invasion force had paid an enormous price! Invading another Chaosverse and taking control over its Quintessence was an extremely, extremely difficult task.

“This truly is a perfect cultivation technique.” Ning couldn’t help but sigh in awe when he read through the jade slip. There was literally nothing to change or improve on. Every single part of the process, from start to finish, was filled with boundless mysteries. It was profounder than profound and represented true and utter perfection.

This sort of cultivation ensured that the energies produced by cultivation were all one and the same, making it even more complete than the azureflower mist energy Ning used. In the end, the azureflower mist energy still had some flaws. Sithe cultivators, however, were able to use their energies to both control magic treasures and refine their bodies to make them comparable to the bodies of Ancient cultivators. At the Daolord stage, no truesoul crumbling would occur whatsoever.

“Such perfection.” After reading through the technique, Ning couldn’t help but feel a sense of despair. He was completely incapable of creating something like this; the difference between them was incredibly vast.

Autarch Titanos and the other Autarchs had been alive for countless years, but they couldn’t create anything like this either. All of them had given up! Ning felt certain that this technique was probably created by the Chaoslord of the Sithe Chaosverse, as in order to create a technique like this you would first have to create an appropriate language for it! Every single character of this language was filled with the boundless mysteries of the Dao, and the language only completely surpassed Ning’s abilities.

Only with that marvelous, arcane script could such an even more arcane technique be created.

“Once our civilization gives birth to an Omega Autarch, we’ll have our own Lord of Chaos and will also be able to produce such marvelous techniques,” Autarch Titanos said. “We’ll skyrocket in many different ways, and our weapons and treasures shall also rise to become comparable with those of the Sithe.”

Ning nodded. Right now, they were behind in every single area; techniques, weapons, warships, and more. Their only advantage lay in geography! This was their home, and so every single stance they used was filled with the tremendous power of the Dao. In contrast, their opponents were being constantly suppressed and stifled by the prime essences.

“Oh, right. Darknorth, every single Autarch has a message-talisman that allows us to communicate with each other across great distances. So long as we are within the Chaosverse, we’ll be able to speak to each other right away,” Autarch Titanos said as he produced a dark-red jade talisman in his hand. “These talismans aren’t easy to make. Previously, only Autarchs had access to them. You, however, are special. You get one as well. If there’s anything you need, just notify the six of us!”

Ning accepted the dark-red message-talisman. It was so red, it looked like it had been bathed in blood. After binding it, Ning was able to immediately sense the other six who were connected to it. He was able to tell who each of the six was due to their unique auras, with the most unfamiliar one most likely being the Autarch who was in charge of safeguarding the Sithe lair, Autarch Mogg.

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The Autarchs spent quite some time chatting with Ning. They stood at the very apex of the cultivator civilizations and thus concerned themselves with affairs that involved the entire Chaosverse. Now that Ning had reached the same level, he couldn’t help but sigh at how little he could do. There was a limit to how much longer he would be alive for, after all. In the end, it would be up to the Autarchs and the future Omega Emperors to defend their realm... and the Omega Autarch everyone was waiting for!

That Omega Autarch would catapult their civilization to brand new heights.

Ning used the jade slip to leave behind a full and complete record of his Eternal Omega Sword Dao, and also fully explained the experiences he had during his Daomerge. For example, he wrote that one had to have truly perfected one’s Dao-heart as a prerequisite. Even the Autarchs

couldn't help but shake their heads when they heard this requirement. This was incredibly difficult! Only when one's Dao-heart was perfect could one perfectly fuse heartforce, divine power, and Immortal energy together. This truly was very, very difficult.

However, having Ning's experiences to serve as a guidepost was far better than going in completely blind. If Ning had the benefit of something like this, he would've succeeded in the Daomerge long ago.

After spending half a day here, Ning prepared to bid them all farewell.

"Darknorth, let me send you off," Autarch Ekong said with a smile. "Didn't you say that once you left the Blazesun Domain, you would head back to the Flamedragon Realmverse? That's quite a distance away! I'll save you the trouble and send you myself; that will be much faster. Once I reach the Flamedragon Realmverse, I'll go ahead and deal with that set of Yin-Yang Samsara Wheels."

"Then I'll have to trouble you to help out, Autarch Ekong," Ning said appreciatively.

# Chapter 15: Autarch Ekong

Creeeeak. The wooden door swung open, with Ji Ning and Autarch Ekong walking out side-by-side. Autarch Titanos, Autarch Skyfeeder, Autarch Bolin, and Autarch Stonerule remained inside the cottage, but they rose to their feet to send the two off. As for the eight Domain Rulers, they hurriedly and respectfully parted before the two.

“Master.” The Flamewing God was being exceptionally obedient today. The five Autarchs had given it a rare sense of enormous pressure.

“Let’s go,” Ning said with a smile.

“Done already?” Flamewing blurted out. It was common for major powers to spend a million years gathered together and chatting about the Dao.

“How long did you think it would take?” Ning smiled as he glanced at the eight Domain Rulers. “Shall you come with us?”

“We’re in no rush to leave.”

“Please go right on ahead, Daolord.” It was quite rare that the eight Domain Rulers had a good excuse to come visit one of the Autarchs; how could they simply return like this? They naturally wanted to get some tips or pointers out of Autarch Skyfeeder first.

“Darknorth, just notify us if there is anything you need at all,” Autarch Titanos said.

“If there’s anything we can do, we’ll put all our effort into carrying it out,” Autarch Stonerule agreed.

And so, watched by four Autarchs and eight Domain Rulers, the two departed. Autarch Ekong released a field of power which covered both Ning and Flamewing, then began to advance through the sea of prime essences at high speed. Whoosh! They almost instantly vanished off into the horizon.

“This has been my first meeting with Daolord Darknorth, but it is also most likely a final farewell,” Autarch Bolin sighed. Ning didn’t have much

time left. Given how strong he was, he probably wouldn't need to trouble them for anything he needed. It was naturally quite unlikely that they would ever meet again.

"Although we've only met him this once, he's done something truly incredible for all of civilization," Autarch Stonerule said.

"Ensure that his homeland is protected. That's all we can do for him now."

The Autarchs felt many mixed emotions. In their eyes, Daolord Darknorth was like a dazzling meteor who shone as radiantly as any Autarch, but it was destined for him to fall. And yet... the light of this meteor would illuminate a brand new path for all cultivators to walk! All they could do was take care of Daolord Darknorth as best they could... but at his level, there really were very few things he needed help with.

For Ning, seizing an otherverse from someone else would be incredibly easy. At most it would cost him a bit of extra time.

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Autarch Ekong continued to flare his around around Ning and Flamewing, allowing them to travel through the sea of prime essences at incredible speeds. In truth, Ning would've been able to do the same, but his truesoul probably would've fully disintegrated from the exertion before they had even made it out of the Quintessence. Autarch Ekong didn't have this concern and so was able to move at maximum speed.

Soon, they left the Quintessence. After travelling a great distance, they reappeared within the Blazesun Domain. Here, within an empty region of space, there was a realmship with Nuwa, Su Youji, Patriarch Treewind, Azurefiend, Hegemon Goodsong, Emperor Jade Rainbow, and a number of others inside it. They were all relaxing and discussing the Dao while waiting for Ning to return.

"Master's back!" Azurefiend, who was in control of the realmship, was the first to notice the three figures who had appeared outside.

Whoosh! Those three figures instantly appeared inside of the realmship.

When Nuwa and the others saw the muscular, horned man dressed in green robes who was by Ning's side, they immediately fell silent.

Ning smiled: "This is Autarch Ekong."

"The Autarch of Annihilation?" Patriarch Treewind turned slightly pale.

"Respectful greetings, Autarch Annihilation." Patriarch Treewind and Emperor Jade Rainbow were the first to speak out, quickly followed by the others. Ning was able to refer to the man by his name, 'Ekong', but most cultivators would respectfully address and refer to him as 'Autarch Annihilation'. The Autarch of Annihilation was extremely famous, especially since he had arisen after the Dawn War. All learned figures like Patriarch Treewind knew of his name and title.

Autarch Ekong said calmly, "No need to stand on ceremony. I'll be coming with you for a time, so you can all relax." But of course, no one present could possibly relax save for Ning himself. Even Flamewing was shifting from side to side.

"Autarch Ekong, let's go find that otherverse first," Ning said.

"Very well, let's go." Autarch Ekong sent out his will, generating a massive wave of power that scooped up the realmship and then sent it tearing through spacetime. Just a heartbeat later, they were out of the Blazesun Domain and within a region of darkness. A second spacetime warp, and they had arrived in an empty region within another one of the Eight Domains, the Roaring Elephant Domain.

They moved so fast that Patriarch Treewind, Nuwa, and the others were all speechless. The many complicated spacetime obstacles within the Eight Domains were nothing to the Autarchs!

"Is that an otherverse? An ownerless otherverse?" Patriarch Treewind, Hegemon Azurefiend, and the others all called out in surprise. They were able to clearly see an enormous globe off in the distance that looked as though it was merely a hundred billion kilometers in diameter. This globe was covered with a layer of light that distorted time, and it emanated ripples of unfathomable profundity.

Otherverses were incredibly vast inside and were comparable to a realmverse... but from the outside, they weren't necessarily all that large! When the Autarchs first created them, they were merely palm-sized. If no one was in control of them, they would grow to become a hundred billion kilometers in diameter, and their aura would be clearly visible for any to see. But once someone bound an otherverse, things would be completely different.

BOOM!

"We should be celebrating the fact that we discovered this otherverse. Why do we have to fight to the death? If this battle continues, both of you would probably die before winning this thing. How about this? Why don't you let me take control over this otherverse. I promise I'll give you the next one! I'm also willing to give you almost all of my treasures. Why must you be so stubborn?" Five figures were engaged in a furious battle off in the distance.

"You are completely shameless! Give me the next one? Who knows when that will be! We've all been cultivating for countless ages before encountering something like this! How can I possibly just let you take it? Either give me the otherverse or give me a comparable amount of treasures. Compared to the otherverse, the treasures you offered are a joke!"

It was quite a furious battle, but the two sides were fairly evenly matched. In a situation like this, it would be difficult for either side to truly defeat or kill the other. This was why neither side was willing to give up. Generally speaking, the battle would only come to an end once one side had completely depleted their reserves of divine power and Immortal energy. In fact, for Hegemons to end up perishing was quite ordinary as well.

"Flamewing, make them stop," Ning said with a laugh. It would be rather excessive to ask Autarch Ekong to handle this, while the other experts probably wouldn't be frightening enough to bring an immediate halt.

"Yes, Master." Flamewing immediately assented to the order, then

turned towards the battling experts. “HEY! YOU FIVE! STOP THAT RIGHT NOW!” A thunderous roar swept through spacetime as a giant winged bear who was bathed in flames suddenly appeared. Flamewing glowered down towards the five with unbridled arrogance, causing all of them to instantly turn pale with terror. “A Chaos Primordial?!”

If a Chaos Primordial wanted to kill a Hegemon, it would be simplicity itself.

Whoosh! Moments later, an entire host of cultivators came flying out of the realmship, with Ning and Autarch Ekong in the lead. Behind them were Nuwa, Patriarch Treewind, Emperor Jade Rainbow, Hegemon Goodsong, and the others.

“W-what...”

“Isn’t that Patriarch Treewind?”

The Eight Domains were all located quite close to the Quintessence of the Chaosverse, and so these five Hegemons instantly recognized the incredibly famous Patriarch Treewind and equally famous Emperor Jade Rainbow. Both of them were Otherverse Lords! As for Hegemon Goodsong, they were able to immediately see that he was a Golden Emperor, which meant he also had the combat power of an Otherverse Lord. Any of the three would be able to slay them with ease, as could Flamewing.

The scary thing was, none of these four were the leaders of this group. The two leaders... one was a white-robed youth with a black sheath on his back whose truesoul was disintegrating. A Daolord who had failed the Daomerge, then? The other was a horned, muscular, green-robed man whose aura, even when restrained, was enough to cause them to quiver in their boots. They had never felt terror like this before.

“An Autarch!” Although they had never met an Autarch before, they instantly understood that it had to be an Autarch. Only an Autarch could bring them such a sense of utter terror.

“A Daolord who failed the Daomerge but can stand alongside an Autarch... that has to be the legendary Daolord Darknorth.”

The five Hegemons stood there, shaking with terror. They no longer even thought about fighting over the otherverse! They were stunned by this utterly terrifying squad that had appeared before them.

Ning couldn't help but secretly sigh. Each Autarch had a different way of dealing with things. Autarch Titanos would generally completely hide his aura, while Autarch Ekong clearly was more dominating and imperious in his actions.

"Bah, Skyfeeder... the ownerless otherverse she picked out for us had actually been discovered by other cultivators already." Autarch Ekong frowned and shook his head. Given his pride, he really didn't want to earn a reputation for taking otherverses away from Hegemons. He immediately said, "Darknorth, have your friend go and bind that otherverse, I suppose."

"Go ahead, Nuwa," Ning said.

"Alright." Nuwa didn't hesitate, immediately flying towards that otherverse.

"As for the five of you." Autarch Ekong frowned. "This otherverse was never meant for you, so you can forget about it. However... since you managed to discover it, we are bound together by karma. I'll give each of you some good fortune. You can go now." He waved his hand, causing a surge of power to grab all five Hegemons and send them through a spacetime tunnel that led to a treasure cache which Autarch Ekong knew of.

# Chapter 16: Return

The light shimmering over the surface of the otherverse rippled with unfathomable, secretive mysteries.

Nuwa entered it all by herself. Just a heartbeat later, the otherverse began to change and transform. The aura emanating from it began to retract, while the ripples were completely restrained as well... and at the same time, a flicker of green vitality appeared on its surface.

“This otherverse seems to have life in it,” Su Youji said with surprise as she stared at the otherverse.

“It is indeed filled with life,” Autarch Ekong said calmly. “Ownerless otherverses will operate in accordance with their intrinsic nature, but they won’t have a will of their own! Now that Nuwa has bound this one, Nuwa’s will shall become the will of this entire otherverse, and her life force shall become one with the otherverse. This otherverse shall become one of her incarnations.”

Moments later, the otherverse began to shrink in size before vanishing almost completely. Nuwa reappeared once more as the tiny little dot flew straight into her body.

“Disciple, where do you plan to station your otherverse?” Patriarch Treewind asked.

“Close to home,” Nuwa said. “That way, the people of my homeland will also be able to enter the otherverse and live there.”

Ning approved of this plan. Once an otherverse was affixed somewhere, it would become a foundation of power. Otherverses also had many uses; for example, one could use the power of an otherverse to warp through spacetime at the speed of a realmship. It could even be linked to the outside world via a stable spacetime tunnel! However, the longer the tunnel was the more difficult its creation would be. Nuwa was definitely going to establish a stable, permanent spacetime tunnel between her otherverse and the Three Realms, and so she had to keep it fairly close to the Flamedragon Realmverse.

Based on what Ning now knew, it seemed obvious that the Otherverse Lord of the 'alternate universe' which Ning had once visited, 'the lord of the Church of Annihilation', had to have a connection to Hegemon Brightshore! Otherverse Lords were in absolute control over their otherverses, as the otherverses served like their incarnations. There was no way that Hegemon Brightshore would've been able to 'secretly' establish a spacetime tunnel to it.

The reason why Hegemon Brightshore had claimed otherwise was because he wanted Ning, Skyfire, and the others to feel as though they were in a dangerous place. He wanted to ensure that they would be on their guard at all times; only then would this adventure serve its true purpose. Ning suspected that if the 'protectors' had died, nothing would happen... but if Skyfire Brightshore had been at the verge of dying, Hegemon Brightshore or the lord of the Church of Annihilation would've intervened to save him!

In other words, that seemingly dangerous adventure had actually been just a tempering experience for Skyfire Brightshore. There had been no real danger at all, and Ning's group had merely served as his companions.

There had been no real danger... but of course, Hegemon Brightshore couldn't let Skyfire know that! This was yet another testament to how much effort Hegemon Brightshore put into his race. He truly did pour his blood, sweat, and tears into making it prosper.

"Let's go. We're heading back to the Flamedragon Realmverse," Ning said.

Autarch Ekong, Ning, and the others all boarded the realmship and tore through spacetime, once more warping towards the Flamedragon Realmverse.

Halfway there, Hegemon Goodsong, Patriarch Treewind, Emperor Jade Rainbow, and most of the others all departed. There was no way Ning would keep them around at all times, after all. Nuwa bade her own master farewell for now. She was going to go back home.

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They continued to advance through spacetime, moving far more quickly than when they had left the Flamedragon Realmverse. The realmship tore through spacetime at frightening speeds, causing spacetime to twist into a dazzling rainbow tunnel around them.

“Darknorth.” Autarch Ekong and Ning were seated facing each other, sipping some wine and chatting casually. Su Youji, Azurefiend, and the others naturally didn’t dare to disturb them.

“What are your plans for after I deal with the Yin-Yang Samsara Wheels?” Autarch Ekong asked.

“What CAN I plan? Haha. While I’m still alive, I’m going to wander around the Chaosverse for a while,” Ning said. “But of course, I’ll also analyze those Sithe techniques. Who knows, maybe I’ll be able to create a complete technique that will allow me to somehow survive. If that happens, I’ll stand a good chance of becoming an Omega Autarch. Wouldn’t that be just perfect? Haha. I’m afraid to even imagine how wonderful that would be.”

“Who knows? It might just work.” Autarch Ekong laughed as well.

In truth, both of them knew that this was far too difficult. Even Autarchs would feel despair when they saw the marvelous, perfect techniques the Sithe used. Ning felt the same. He himself had the feeling that if he truly did devote all of his attention to analyzing those techniques, he might have a chance at surviving... but the amount of time needed would be measured in the hundreds of millions of chaos cycles, if not longer.

The short amount of time left to him wasn’t even close to being enough for him to accomplish this. Not even Autarchs could accomplish this! Autarch Awakener had been the most stubborn and had poured the most effort into it, but in the end he had still failed.

“I was joking just now. However... even though I’m going to die, I’m still going to advance along the path of the Dao,” Ning said. “Ekong, the five of you have already given me your techniques, along with the techniques of Autarch Entropos and Autarch Mogg. I’m going to wander the universe and learn as much as I can. I’ll make as many breakthroughs as I can.

Even if I am to die, I shall die on the path I have chosen.”

When Ning had recorded his Eternal Omega Dao technique, the various Autarchs had handed over all of their own Daos to Ning as well, hoping that they might inspire him somehow. But of course, Ning wasn't to transmit them to any others; he was the only one permitted to examine them.

In the Blazesun Domain, Ning had mastered the mysteries of water and then created the Water Sword Dao, which had benefited him quite a bit. Ning was planning to continue along this path and upgrade his other Daos to the Hegemon level, then slowly infuse them all into his Eternal Omega Sword Dao. This was a path towards Autarchy that would require an extremely long period of time. Ning didn't have enough time, but he would still continue along this path.

“Haha... to be honest, I'm just bored. If I don't cultivate, what WOULD I do?” Ning smirked.

“Now that's more like it! When you have as much time to burn as we do, meditating on the Dao is a great idea. Come, let's drink!” Autarch Ekong lifted his wine cup in a toast.

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The Flamedragon Realmverse. The Terror Starsea.

A group of cultivators were gathered here. Hegemon Brightshore, Hegemon Windrain, Hegemon Netherlily, Daoist Bluestone, Emperor Goldisle, Emperor Anchen, Emperor Islehide, Emperor Severfive... all of them were present. Ning's Primaltwin was located in the Flamedragon Realmverse, and so he had notified the Emperors and Hegemons early on.

Once they heard that an Autarch was going to intervene and destroy the Yin-Yang Samsara Wheels, they became incredibly excited. They quickly spread the word far and wide, allowing all of the six major powers within the Flamedragon Realmverse to know what was about to happen!

Everyone was incredibly excited by this news, because the destruction of the Flamedragon Realmverse would result in them being forced to wander

the Chaosverse as refugees. Almost all creatures within the realmverse would perish, with only a tiny fraction of creatures who were protected by the major powers and drawn into their estate-treasures being able to survive. Even if they made it to other realmverses, they would be viewed with disdain by the original inhabitants of those realmverses. This was exactly how the Dark Kingdom had been treated by the rest of the Flamedragon Realmverse!

There were also some races who actually lived in the Terror Starsea itself! Thus, everyone hoped for the Yin-Yang Samsara Wheels to be destroyed. They all hoped that their homeland would be preserved. To wander as refugees and then be rejected as outsiders was not a good life to live!

Whoosh. A spacetime tunnel appeared out of nowhere, followed by a realmship flying out of it.

“That’s Daolord Darknorth’s realmship.” Hegemon Brightshore and the leaders of the six powers all stared over excitedly.

A group of people flew out of the realmship, led by Ning and a muscular, horned man. Behind them were Su Youji, Protector Whitethaw, Flamewing, and Azurefiend.

“This is Autarch Ekong,” Ning introduced.

“Respectful greetings, Autarch Annihilation.” Hegemon Brightshore led the various cultivators in a deep, respectful bow.

Autarch Ekong nodded. “I’ve been asked to come here by Daolord Darknorth. No need to stand on ceremony. I’ll go and destroy the Yin-Yang Samsara Wheels right now.” As he spoke, he glanced at Ning and nodded.

“Sorry for the trouble,” Ning said with a smile.

“Haha, a minor matter... but the Yin-Yang Samsara Wheels are rather troublesome to deal with. It’ll take me a bit of time.” Autarch Ekong flew off into the distance, moving through the void towards the distant Yin-Yang Samsara Wheels.

“That really was an Autarch!”

“An Autarch really has come to destroy the Yin-Yang Samsara Wheels.”

“The Flamedragon Realmverse has been saved!”

“We won’t have to evacuate after all.” Everyone present felt tremendously excited. Even Hegemon Brightshore, Hegemon Netherlily, and Hegemon Windrain were besides themselves with joy. As for the Aeonians... Emperor Islehide and Emperor Anchen felt rather awkward when facing Ning. Although there were a few grudges between them, the difference in power was now so vast that they had long ago admitted defeat. As for Ning, given that Autarch Bolin had been the creator of the Aeonians, he wasn’t going to quibble over ancient matters.

“Once this matter is resolved, we can all relax.” Ning smiled as well. After this was finished, he would be at ease as well.

“Youji, watch closely. Events like this are quite rare,” Ning said with a sigh.

The distant Yin-Yang Samsara Wheels consisted of two enormous symbiotic vortexes that were so vast, each of them was comparable to a hundred Badlands Territories in size!

The enormous green vortex was like a vast and verdant world, bathing the area around it with green light that looked like the surface of the sea. As for the black vortex, it formed a world of light around it as well. As the two vortexes slowly drew closer to each other, all the laws of spacetime began to twist and break apart. It had already reached an inconceivable level of power, allowing it to shatter apart the natural laws governing the universe.

In fact... it was extremely close to Autarchs in power! However, it was just a celestial body. It wasn’t alive, and so it could only passively ‘stand’ there and be beaten down. This was why Autarchs could destroy them, if the Autarch was willing to pay the necessary price.

Rumble...

Autarch Ekong transformed into a giant, but compared to the Yin-Yang

Samsara Wheels he was still a tiny little figure. He devoured an enormous amount of energy from the surrounding area, then produced a greataxe in his hands.

He first delivered a furious blow with the greataxe towards the green vortex. BOOM! The power of this blow was so tremendous that even the distant Ning sighed in amazement. This truly was an impressive display of power.

# Chapter 17: Back to the Three Realms

Autarch Ekong furiously slammed his greataxe down again and again, each strike filled with dominating power. BOOM! The Yin-Yang Samsara Wheels seemed to sense that they were in danger, and they began to instinctively react and defend themselves. The green vortex and the black vortex simultaneously began to expand in size, almost instantly expanding to become many times greater than they were previously. A moment later, they instantly shrank to become less than half of their original size.

This sudden expansion and contraction resulted in the power of both vortexes skyrocketing. Ji Ning and the others were watching from very far away, but even so Hegemon Brightshore and the others felt their hearts tremble with fear.

A while later, Ning's eyes lit up: "It's almost done."

"Break!" Autarch Ekong roared furiously as he smote down his greataxe. The axe actually transformed into an enormous black shadow that was as large as the green vortex itself!

The green vortex let out a strange, almost 'groaning' sound as the greataxe caved its center in, but it quickly managed to repair itself.

"Break! Break! BREAK!" Autarch Ekong attacked with extraordinary ferocity, each strike filled with the power of annihilation. After the Autarch let out twelve furious shouts, the green vortex was beginning to tremble violently. The nearby black vortex was doing its best to devour and tear apart all of the energies around it, but it was unable to shake the Autarch at all. In the end, it could only 'watch' helplessly as its companion was annihilated!

BOOM! The green vortex finally disintegrated, resulting in an awesome wave of boundless life energy spreading out in every direction.

The black vortex could not survive on its own. It instantly began to collapse in on itself, with the process causing a tremendous amount of destruction to its surroundings. Even Autarch Ekong had to generate an aura of flowing black light to protect himself against the final, suicidal

burst of the black vortex.

Finally, the Yin-Yang Samsara Wheels were destroyed. The only things left were a few ripples of power where they had existed.

“Hahaha!”

“The Yin-Yang Samsara Wheels have finally been destroyed. The Flamedragon Realmverse is saved!”

“This is absolutely wonderful!”

“The Flamedragon Realmverse shall be able to last for countless more aeons. We won’t have to evacuate!” The Hegemons and Emperors of the six powers of the Flamedragon Realmverse had all been watching nervously. Now, they shook with excitement and their faces were covered with joy.

Hegemon Brightshore turned to look at Ning, who was standing next to him. He never would’ve imagined that the gravest peril the Flamedragon Realmverse faced, the unstoppable apocalypse of the Samsara Wheels, would eventually be resolved thanks to the then-World God he had abducted all those years ago. It all seemed like a marvel, a miracle. That World-level kid had skyrocketed in power at an inconceivable speed, reaching a level where everyone looked up to him.

“Thank you, Darknorth,” Hegemon Brightshore said.

“If you want to thank anyone, go thank Autarch Ekong.” Ning looked at Autarch Ekong, who was flying back with a rather tired look on his face.

“Don’t downplay your role. The entire Flamedragon Realmverse owes you a debt of gratitude. If it wasn’t for you, almost all of the weaker beings in the entire realmverse would’ve died once the apocalypse came! Very, very few would’ve been evacuated and given the dubious honor of wandering homeless through the cosmos. In fact, most of the evacuees probably would’ve died during the wandering... and the few who survived would be hated as outsiders once they reached their new home.” Hegemon Brightshore sighed. “It’s hard for me to even imagine it.”

“My own homeland is located in the Flamedragon Realmverse. I was

acting on my own behalf as well,” Ning said. He could sense the tremendous gratitude the leaders of the six powers of the Flamedragon Realmverse felt towards him. Even the Aeonians who had once held a grudge against him such as Emperor Anchen and Emperor Islehide were staring towards him with gratitude. Now that the realmverse was not going to be destroyed, the Aeonians would be able to continually benefit from the estate-world which Autarch Bolin had left behind for them.

Whoosh. Autarch Ekong came flying over, looking rather exhausted. “These Yin-Yang Samsara Wheels really were a pain to deal with. If they had been allowed to grow for another million chaos cycles, even I would’ve been gravely injured in the process of destroying them,” Autarch Ekong said with a sigh.

Ning nodded. The Yin-Yang Samsara Wheels were similar to the Wellspring Sea of the enormous Blazesun Domain. They were all bodies of natural energy that actually surpassed the Autarchs in terms of raw power. However, because they lacked true sentience, it wasn’t too hard to deal with them.

“Alright, now that I’ve dealt with the Yin-Yang Samsara Wheels, I’ll be off,” Autarch Ekong said. “If there’s anything you need, just give me a call.”

“Come to my estate and have some wine first?” Ning felt as though he was being a bad host to let the Autarch leave right away; the man had come all this way to help him out, after all.

“Haha, no need. Honestly, I have much more and much better wine than you.” Autarch Ekong bade Ning farewell, then stepped through spacetime and departed from the Flamedragon Realmverse.

The only person he spoke to this entire time was Ning. He didn’t say so much as a single word to the others. He was by nature a solitary and arrogant person. Those he respected, he’d view as friends and brothers; those he didn’t, he wouldn’t so much as glance at.

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Word of the Yin-Yang Samsara Wheels’ destruction quickly spread across almost all of the supreme figures of the Flamedragon Realmverse.

Everyone felt incredibly excited; finally, the looming, creeping apocalypse that had been a threat to all of them had been dealt with!

As for Ning, he led Su Youji, Azurefiend, and Nuwa back to the Three Realms.

“Mother Nuwa!”

“Nuwa!”

“Mother!” The entire Three Realms was thrown into a state of excitement. By now, the ‘Three Realms’ actually consisted of an enormous field of space that held a total of 8100 chaosworlds within it! Ning’s Primaltwin was here, and so he had already spread the word that Mother Nuwa was coming back. Subhuti, Maitreya, Kuafu, and the other major powers who had arisen during the first age were all incomparably excited.

Finally, Mother Nuwa was coming home!

Subhuti, Windfiend, Kuafu, Jade Cauldron, Lu Dongbin, and tens of thousands of other cultivators were all waiting in the emptiness of space in front of the Three Realms Region, staring off into the distance.

Finally, a dimensional ripple appeared, followed by a realmship appearing within it. Several figures flew out of the realmship, led by a white-robed Ning and a silver-robed Mother Nuwa who bore a blood diamond in the center of her forehead. After binding the otherverse she had been given, Mother Nuwa’s aura had become even vaster than ever before, as it whispered of the limitless power of the otherverse itself.

“Nuwa.” Subhuti was so excited that his eyes were starting to fill up with unshed tears.

“Nuwa.” Windfiend revealed a smile. She had been an old enemy of his, but he had never been able to best her. She had been the undisputed leader of the Nuwa Alliance.

“Mother Nuwa.” Kuafu and the others were all incredibly excited.

“Subhuti, Kuafu, Jade Cauldron, Maitreya...” When Nuwa saw all of these old friends, she felt emotions surging through her breast. Many of her

oldest friends were already gone, such as Daoist Three Purities, Lord Tathagata the Buddha, or the Three Sovereigns of Mankind. The dazzling Houyi had also perished, as had many of the younger cultivators she had held high hopes for.

However, a few of her old friends were still alive, as were some of the ‘children’.

“Nuwa.” Sun Wukong was incredibly excited.

“Silly monkey.” Nuwa smiled happily. When she saw some of these familiar young faces, she couldn’t help but feel overjoyed. This was her home! This was the place where she had been born from the primordial chaos, and these were the friends she had slowly grown to know. She had been born out of chaos, and so these friends were like her family members.

When she had left the Three Realms, she had wished to see the wider world outside before coming back and using what she had learned to strengthen the Three Realms, making it better than ever. Alas, destiny makes fools of mortals and Gods alike; she was actually teleported to the indescribably distant Blazefire Domain and had only survived thanks to Patriarch Treewind saving her. Now, thanks to Ning locating her, she had finally come back home.

Mother Nuwa’s return was an event of great joy. They naturally held an enormous celebratory banquet for her. The many Immortals and Fiendgods of the Three Realms all came to take part. Not only did even the World-level cultivators come, even many of their Elder God and Ancestral Immortal disciples were permitted to take part. Millions of Immortals and Fiendgods took part in this grand banquet.

Seated at the highest positions within this banquet were Mother Nuwa, Subhuti, Ji Ning, Windfiend, Kuafu, and the other ancient figures. By now, Ji Brightmoon, Ji Yichuan, and Yuchi Snow had all reached the World level, and they were all seated quite high up. They were very happy to be able to see the legendary Mother Nuwa herself.

This was a congregation of countless Immortals and Fiendgods, and

Immortal wine flowed liberally. Ning was very happy, and he naturally wouldn't be stingy with his resources. He naturally had far more treasures than anyone else by now.

"The Three Realms are truly flourishing." Ning felt a sense of joy when he saw all the cultivators present, and he couldn't help but sigh in praise.

The Three Realms were flourishing far more than in previous years. Now that an Otherverse Lord like Mother Nuwa was standing guard over it with the assistance of many powerful Sithe treasures, the Three Realms truly had reached an incredibly high level of power. Given even the Autarchs had promised to help watch over it, Ning finally felt completely satisfied with its chances.

"It really is flourishing. Only... a few of our old friends are missing," Subhuti said from next to Ning.

Ning nodded. "Yes, a few people are missing." Many of the true, original leaders of the Three Realms were missing, as were some of his friends and his wife.

"If they could all come back and be reunited, how wonderful would that be?" Ning closed his eyes, just imagining the scene.

# Chapter 18: A Wandering Life

After the banquet came to an end, Ji Ning led Nuwa and Subhuti out to begin assembling the formation! Ning's Primaltwin had already assembled roughly 90% of the formation, and it only really needed the powerful castle to merge together with the formation and become its core and command center. This would allow the power of the formation to skyrocket.

No one save for the Autarchs would stand a chance at breaking apart a formation like this. Even the most powerful Sourcewalkers like the Blazesun Ruler would probably find it very difficult to breach this formation. It could be described as truly impregnable!

Clack clack clack... the castle slowly slid into position, moving to become the very center of the entire Three Realms Region. The leaves at its bottom layer began to manifest green ley-lines that looked like the veins of a tree leaf. These green ley-lines reached out of the leaves themselves, stretching out into empty space and then completely disappearing. They had completely linked up to the rest of the grand formation.

Nuwa maintained control over the fort while Ning made the necessary adjustments. After three days, they finally completed the great project.

Boom! The entire castle itself vanished into thin air, as did the formations surrounding the Three Realms. They had all turned invisible, but their power had just skyrocketed to a brand new level.

"I'll arrange for a golem to stand here and keep watch, ensuring that nothing within the range of the formation's scanners can avoid detection," Nuwa said. "If it finds anything, I'll instantly enter the castle and take control over it."

Ning revealed a smile. The nearby Subhuti couldn't help but turn to glance at Ning. He knew just how much this disciple of his had done for the Three Realms. Ning wanted to do everything he could before he passed away.

"Oh, right. Master," Ning suddenly said, "I'm planning to spend some

time with Brightmoon and my parents. I'm going to wander about the Chaosverse with them, seeing the many marvels of the cosmos and allowing them to better understand the Dao. Master, Windfiend, would you like to join me?"

"Wonderful!" Subhuti revealed a delighted look, then asked, "But wouldn't we be disturbing your family trip?"

"Haha, it's fine. My retainers will be taking part as well. It'll make this trip more fun," Ning said with a laugh. He was planning to spend his remaining years cultivating, but just staying in seclusion and training in isolation was pointless. He didn't have much time left; he was going to spend at least some of it visiting the marvelous sights of the Chaosverse. Many of those places might be 'dangerous', but there were no dangers that concerned him in the slightest!

In the Chaosverse, any naturally-occurring dangers were no longer any threat to him at all; he was on the same level of power as the Autarchs, after all! Even the Eight Domains and the prime essence sea were nothing to him. The only place that Ning felt any true dread of was the Sithelands. There were numerous locations even in the outer perimeter of the Sithelands, which had already been breached by the Autarchs, which were capable of posing a threat to him.

This was because even the Autarchs had to put tremendous effort into breaching the outer perimeter. There were a number of places the Autarchs didn't actually go inside and had instead simply sealed off. Thus, there were many cultivators who would go exploring the outer reaches of the Sithelands! That was a truly dangerous place, and it was filled with all sorts of Sithe relics, treasures, and traps. Ning didn't feel that it was a suitable choice for his parents and his daughter to visit.

He'd go take a look when his life was nearing its end. For now, he was going to engage in cultivation instead. He had to infuse all the other Daos into his Eternal Omega Sword Dao, and he was also going to view many of the natural wonders of the Chaosverse! This would actually be helpful for him in comprehending the Dao. Besides, this was a good chance for him to show his daughter and his parents some truly dangerous places. There

were some places where not even Otherverse Lords would dare tread, but for him it wouldn't be a problem.

"Perhaps Brightmoon will be able to make a breakthrough as a result," Ning mused. There was no chance his parents would improve any further on the path of cultivation, as they had to rely on pills just to reach the World level. Brightmoon had spent 5 years and 2 months in Yu Wei's belly before being born, and she was born with such incredible talent that she reached the Celestial Immortal level with ease. Although her path to the World level had been rather bumpy, Ning had patiently and attentively instructed her, ensuring that she was able to succeed without needing to use any pills. Ning had certain expectations of his daughter; he wasn't going to just let her take the easy way.

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Ning's final decision was to bring his family members, his retainers, and the duo of Subhuti and Windfiend! Windfiend was rather hesitant about this, as his relationship with Ning couldn't quite compare to that of Subhuti's. However, he was now a member of the Three Realms. The future of the Three Realms would be up to Nuwa, Subhuti, and Windfiend. Ning wanted to help his master and Windfiend as best he could.

"Haha, we've finally left the Flamedragon Realmverse!" Brightmoon was quite excited as she stared from within the realmship. Everyone in this realmship was like an elder family member, and so she was able to act in a much more relaxed manner. "I've never left the Flamedragon Realmverse before. I hear that realmverses are all extremely far from each other."

"Calm down. We're going to visit some of the nearby realmverses first, then we'll head off to an extremely distant and dangerous place known as the 'Flamesea Thunderfalls'. That place is highly suitable for training in the Dao of Lightning and the Dao of Fire." Ning looked at his daughter. "Brightmoon, your greatest affinity is with the Dao of Fire. You'll be able to meditate and gain keen insights there."

"Father, didn't you say that the Flamesea Thunderfalls is a place that can easily kill Emperors, and where even Hegemons would suffer heavy

injuries?” Brightmoon asked.

“Yes. It is considered one of the thirty most dangerous locations of the entire Chaosverse,” Ning said.

The nearby Hegemon Azurefiend chuckled, “Little lady, with Master present you have nothing to fear. The Flamesea Thunderfalls is nothing to Master.”

“I’ll protect you too, Brightmoon!” the pudgy Flamewing said, pounding his chest.

Windfiend, Subhuti, Yichuan, and Snow all stared curiously towards the sights outside. None of them had left the Flamedragon Realmverse before.

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Time continued to flow on. Ning’s group spent quite a bit of time wandering all of the realmverses in the Sixteen Realmverses Alliance; in total, they spent over thirty million years here. Ning happily accompanied his family in their wanderings, not worried in the slightest.

Finally, they left the Sixteen Realmverses Alliance and began to wander through the cosmos. They visited many unique locales where the local cultivators were often brutish, powerful, and eccentric. Generally speaking, they weren’t very welcoming of outsiders! But when they saw Ning, they all went on their absolute best behavior.

This was because Ning, to avoid unnecessary trouble, sent Flamewing ahead of them and ensured that the locals would all be sufficiently cowed by the time the realmship arrived. As soon as the locals saw Flamewing, they quickly understood that their visitor was Daolord Darknorth. Who would dare to be disrespectful to him?

“This planet is so beautiful. I’ve never seen a world as beautiful as this one.” Brightmoon loved this place. This was a unique world known as the Immortal Ravine, and Ning’s group ended up spending a million years living here because it truly was quite beautiful. Its lovely but alien environment was completely a product of nature.

“Father, buy this! And that! I want this one also!” Each time Ning

reached a new place, he would ask the local powers to bring over some unique treasures which might be of use to his daughter or his parents. Once they found something of interest, Ning would pay a very high price to acquire the items. Thus, the major powers were quite eager to bring out all of the strange and odd treasures they had stored away. They all hoped for Daolord Darknorth to take a fancy to their treasures, as they knew that Daolord Darknorth wouldn't be stingy in payment.

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Brightmoon, Snow, Yichuan, Subhuti, and Windfiend all had their horizons expanded considerably. Even Su Youji saw much more than she had in the past. Although she had accompanied Ning to the Blazesun Domain, they hadn't made any detours and so she hadn't really seen much. This time, they were on what amounted to a leisurely excursion!

They toured through one place after another, and when they found some unique treasures or saw some unique sights, Ning would seize the opportunity to guide his daughter and help her in her cultivation.

But of course, Ning devoted the majority of his time to his own cultivation. His Primaltwin remained within the Azureflower Estate. Not only had he acquired a large number of Sithe cultivation techniques from the Autarchs, he had even acquired the Daos they used to reach Autarchy! Ning naturally wanted to spend his time analyzing them and perhaps find a way for himself to survive. Although the chances were quite low, he still had to give it a shot. Ning wasn't the type to just sit there and wait for death.

"The Heart of Eternity." Within the Azureflower Estate. The black-robed Ning waved his hand, causing the Heart of Eternity to appear and float in the air before him. It remained covered by layers of inscrutable runes.

"It's been quite some time since I've tried to solve it. I should give it another shot." Ning had reached a much higher level of comprehension, now that he had mastered the Eternal Omega Sword Dao. "I'm far more powerful than I was before I attempted the Daomerge. I should be able to solve more levels of it this time."

Right now, Ning was mainly focusing on two goals in his training. The first was to infuse the other Daos into his Eternal Omega Dao, while the second was to create a perfect cultivation technique. In both cases, his chances for success were extremely slim! As for the Heart of Eternity, Autarch Awakener had poured his heart and soul into its creation. Ning felt certain that spending some more time analyzing it might be of benefit to him.

Crack! Crack! Crack! Ning began to attempt to break through the various layers, and the outermost layers quickly crumbled away before him. Now that Ning had reached a much higher level of insight, he was able to solve the seals much more quickly than before. He blew through the lower levels like rotting deadwood, reaching the fiftieth level almost instantly.

Level fifty. Level sixty. Level seventy...

# Chapter 19: Three Thousand Chaos Cycles

Next to Ning was the elderly white-haired spirit of the Azureflower Estate. The old man watched rather eagerly. “Daolord Darknorth may have failed the Daomerge, but he gained control over the Eternal Omega Sword Dao and reached a higher level of insight. There is some time left before he dies and his Dao vanishes. Perhaps this time will be enough for him to accomplish Master’s final wishes?”

The black-robed Ji Ning stared at the Heart of Eternity floating in front of him and the seals covering them. Each time he broke through one level of seals, he was able to see the next level and get to work on it, and each time Ning gained a few new insights.

This was because each layer of seals represented much of the wisdom Autarch Awakener had gained over the process of devising the Nine Chaos Seals. Ning’s insights were not on Autarch Awakener’s levels, but he had such a high level of comprehension that when he put some effort into it, his talent combined with the Autarch’s stone dais and the Stonefire Pearl ensured that he could resolve the simpler seals with ease.

Seventy-five. Eighty. Eighty-five. Ninety...

Ning was taking more and more time to solve each layer of seals. Each layer of seals now gave him many new insights, making it increasingly difficult for him to solve them.

“There’s nothing else I can do.” Ning finally came to a halt. He had merely spent a bit over five thousand years in solving the first ninety-two seals, but he had then spent over a hundred thousand years without improving even slightly. The boost given to him by his Eternal Omega Sword Dao had done everything it could; he had blown through the earlier levels with ease, but now he would need to slowly accumulate new insights once more.

“Ninety-two levels... a total of ninety-nine.” Ning revealed a smile. “It seems I have a chance at solving it before I die after all. I really do want to see what Autarch Awakener hid in the Heart of Eternity, for him to have

put so much effort into setting up these levels of seals. According to what the spirit of the estate said, the treasure inside is just as valuable as the Stonefire Pearl!”

Ning had analyzed many Sithe techniques and also mastered the Eternal Omega Sword Dao. These two different paths had allowed him to reach a very high level of insight, and they would be of use to him in breaking through the Heart of Eternity. He had only reached the ninety-second level, but he had more than ten thousand chaos cycles left to him. He still stood a chance.

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After leaving the Flamedragon Realmverse, Ning and his family spent a total of over 1.2 billion years touring through the Chaosverse before finally reaching their first ‘target’, the Flamesea Thunderfalls.

Rumble...

Countless bolts of lightning came crashing down from the skies, so dense that it looked like a vast waterfall of electricity. Below the lightning was a layer of twisted spacetime, and when the waterfall of lightning came crashing down upon the twisted spacetime, the resulting collisions resulted in an enormous sea of fire having formed below. This ‘sea’ just lay there in the void, utterly dazzling to behold. As for the giant waterfall of lightning, it was over a hundred million kilometers thick and looked almost like a vertical pool of lightning.

This truly was a stunning and beautiful sight, but it was also a deadly one. The power of this place was so great that even the laws of the Chaosverse were bent and twisted. This place was perhaps a bit weaker than the Wellspring Sea of the Blazefire Domain, but it was mighty enough to heavily injure Hegemons and obliterate Archon-level Emperors.

Suddenly, a tiny little flying ship appeared in the void directly above the flaming sea of the Flamesea Thunderfalls.

“So this is the Flamesea Thunderfalls?” Brightmoon’s eyes widened as she stared at the vast sea of fire in front of her and the endless ‘waterfall’ of lightning above her.

“The Chaosverse truly is filled with endless marvels,” Subhuti sighed in amazement. “The tiniest amount of power from that thing would obliterate me instantly.”

“Come, let’s go inside and take a look,” Ning said. Boom! For the first time in their journey, Ning unleashed his Sword Dao domain, causing it to surround the realmship as they continued to fly forwards. Brightmoon, Yuchi Snow, and Ji Yichuan were all stunned as they watched themselves charge deep into the lightning waterfall.

Ning’s Sword Dao domain stretched out to a distance of three thousand meters, creating a true void which neither the lightning nor the fire could penetrate.

Whoosh. Ning sent the realmship sinking downwards, plunging through the lightning until it reached the point where the lightning clashed against the sea of fire. This was the place where the waterfall of lightning collided against the distorted spacetime at such an incredibly frenetic rate that the flaming sea was formed, something which was just as powerful as the lightning!

The natural power of the ‘Thunderfalls’ came from the primordial chaos and was truly limitless, and the same was true for the Flamesea. However, there was a limit to how far the power of the Flamesea Thunderfalls could extend. At a certain point, the power would dissipate and turn back into primordial chaos.

“This is the place where the Thunderfalls and the Flamesea meet, where the lightning transforms and gives birth to flame. Brightmoon, focus on your meditations. This place will benefit you greatly,” Ning said. “While you are training here, you must remain within my domain. You are not permitted to go beyond it.”

“Understood,” Brightmoon said obediently. Ning nodded.

In truth, he had long ago ensured that this domain of three thousand meters was completely separated from the outside world. There was no way anything outside could come inside, but it was also impossible for anyone inside to exit! He had given his daughter this stern warning simply

because he wanted to rein her in a bit.

His daughter's path was that of the Dao of Fire, and so Ning was planning to stay here for an extended period of time. His daughter was merely at the World level; his concern was that she wouldn't be patient enough to stay in any one place for an extended period of time.

Ning sat down by himself in the void, assuming the lotus position and beginning to meditate silently. Yichuan and Snow relaxed within the realmship too, sharing some fine food and wine while enjoying the beautiful view in front of them. When they felt bored, they would enter the estate-worlds they carried within them to have some fun.

Su Youji and Ji Brightmoon both trained in the Dao of Fire, and so both of them went into meditation. Subhuti did the same, as he couldn't help but be filled with questions when he stared at the twisted region of spacetime which actually produced fire when the water of lightning slammed into it. He meditated attentively, and as he did he gained many new insights.

The more you saw and the more of the Chaosverse you experienced, the better you would understand how the Dao functioned in its many myriad ways.

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Ning trained the fastest of all. It took him just two years of carefully studying the Flamesea Thunderfalls for him to upgrade his Dao of Lightning to the Hegemonic level. The reason why it hadn't been quite as fast as the Dao of Water was because Ning hadn't previously accumulated quite as many insights in Lightning as he had in Water. However, his overwhelmingly high level of insight into his Eternal Omega Dao made it quite easy for him to reach Hegemony in any and all Daos.

After another twelve years, Ning upgraded his Dao of Fire to the Hegemonic level as well. Ning then turned his attention to the region of twisted spacetime and began to ruminate on the Dao of Space. However, the mysteries of space here were insufficiently incomplete, and so Ning didn't spend much time on it. There really wasn't a need; their next

destination was the perfect place for them to meditate on the Dao of Space.

However, simply understanding these Daos was easy. To fully absorb them into his Eternal Omega Dao... now that would be the hard part.

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Time flowed on. Ning and his family spent a total of ninety-six chaos cycles in the Flamesea Thunderfalls. Only when everyone felt that there were no further insights they could gain did they depart from this place and head towards their next destination. During the past ninety-six chaos cycles, most of them had improved dramatically. Ning had managed to successfully infuse his Dao of Lightning and his Dao of Fire into his Eternal Omega Sword Dao.

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They continued their long excursion, going to many dangerous places where they would spend extended periods of time in meditation. They merely spent twenty or thirty chaos cycles in some places, while they spent over a hundred chaos cycles in others.

These places were all quite different. Some were truly dangerous, while others were simply rather unique. In the blink of an eye, more than three thousand chaos cycles had passed since they had departed from the Flamedragon Realmverse.

During this period of time, Daolords Su Youji, Subhuti, and Windfiend had all improved dramatically. Su Youji could sense that she could attempt the Daomerge whenever she wanted... but of course, she wasn't certain as to whether or not she would succeed.

Subhuti and Windfiend both were Daolords of the Fourth Step. Visiting all these places had been of tremendous benefit to them, as was the guidance on the Dao they had received from Ning and Hegemon Azurefiend.

And of course... there was Brightmoon! She had now visited many places which not even Otherverse Lords would have a chance to visit, places

which fully displayed the mysteries of how the Dao worked in keeping the Chaosverse operating. Frankly speaking, Brightmoon had been given far more opportunities than Ning ever had... but alas, she simply hadn't suffered enough setbacks or danger, and her talent was inferior to Ning's as well. She was just barely able to master a single Supreme Dao, at which point Ning stopped trying to force things.

Next... Brightmoon used her Supreme Dao of Fire to become a Samsara Daolord, and became a Daolord of the Third Step after a fairly brief period of time! It was fairly easy for Daolords to break through in the early stages, after all.

"Y'know, if Master put this much effort into training any of the true geniuses of the Flamedragon Realmverse, I guarantee that they would probably all reach the level of fusing multiple Supreme Daos together," Hegemon Azurefiend whispered to Su Youji. "Our little lady's just not that talented. Even if she succeeds in the Daomerge, she won't be able to become a Hegemon. Her father's comparable to the Autarchs!"

"She's his daughter. Of course he's going to pour all of his effort into training her. Is he supposed to do the same for strangers?" Su Youji said.

Ning truly did put as much effort as he could into training his daughter. He was also extremely studious in guiding his master Subhuti, Windfiend, Su Youji, and his personal disciples. He also provided some tips to Hegemon Azurefiend from time to time.

As for others?

They might be incredibly talented and have had incredible experiences... but what the hell did any of that have to do with Ning? Ning couldn't be bothered with them, much like how none of the Autarchs had popped up to guide Ning in the past, even though he was clearly an incredible talent. Cultivators were self-interested at times, after all.

# Chapter 20: Greatland Planet

Ji Ning was definitely going to do absolutely everything within his power, acquiring treasures like the Daomerge Firecloud Flower, to give his daughter Brightmoon the best possible chance at the Daomerge. If she succeeded, before he died Ning would even ask an Autarch to help find an otherverse for his daughter, letting Brightmoon become an Otherverse Lord! This wasn't completely unheard of; the lord of the Church of Annihilation, for example, wasn't a Hegemon.

In this matter, Ning didn't feel the slightest hint of shame at all. Of course he had to look after his daughter's interests!

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In the indescribably distant Wildsky Realmverse, there was a marvelous place known as the Greatland Planet. Ning was training atop this planet, while Brightmoon, Ji Yichuan, Yuchi Snow, Su Youji, the Flamewing God, Subhuti, and Windfiend had all temporarily left to go exploring the area around it.

The reason why the others didn't stay here was because this place, the Greatland Planet, was quite special. This was a vast planet that was over a hundred trillion kilometers in size. This was the largest planet in all the Chaosverse, and it was formed by an incredibly dense wave of Earth-element energy! The amount of power contained within this single planet was actually comparable to that of the entire Wildsky Realmverse! It was vast, dense, and teeming with life, all thanks to the almighty power of Earth which flowed through it...

Ordinary cultivators would find it impossible to train here, as they would find their mind and body disturbed by the overwhelming power of the place!

This planet was also surrounded by a layer of deep yellow clouds which were so thick and dense, one had to at least be a Hegemon in order to bypass! Thus, there were virtually no cultivators here at all. Although this vast world had given birth to countless living beings, including many

humanoids. These humanoids were quite talented, strong, and attuned to the power of the earth, and many were even born with the ability to control the earth.

However... there was no way for them to actually cultivate! This was because all other Daos had to give this place a wide berth. Even the Dao of Earth itself was hidden deep within the recesses of the world. Even Hegemons would find it very hard to train in the Dao of Earth here. Only someone who was at as high a level of enlightenment as Ning would be able to scry the many secrets hidden deep underground. How could the ordinary mortals here possibly embark upon the path of cultivation?

“I’ve completed the Dao of Earth as well.” A white-robed youth was seated on a patch of grass in front of a thatched cottage within a mountain gorge. A smile was on his face as he reached out with both hands. Whoosh! Whoosh! Whoosh! Whoosh! Whoosh! Swords began to appear out of nowhere, numbering five in total.

The first sword was covered with a layer of flowing, watery light. The second gleamed a faint metallic color, appearing to be indescribably sharp. The third emanated a green aura of life and vitality. The fourth was surrounded by tendrils of flame which gave it utterly explosive power. As for the fifth and final sword, it was covered with a layer of deep yellow light and it seemed weighty beyond measure.

“The Water Sword Dao, the Metal Sword Dao, the Wood Sword Dao, the Fire Sword Dao, the Earth Sword Dao.” Ning nodded. “The Five Elements are now complete. As I thought, it has been somewhat beneficial to my truesoul.” However, Ning also noticed that his improvements in the Dao were suffering from diminishing returns when it came to nourishing his truesoul. This was particularly true now that he had many truesoul treasures; to further slow down the rate of crumbling was becoming increasingly difficult.

“I’ve infused the Dao of Lightning and the Five Elements into my Eternal Omega Sword Dao, making for six in total. The Dao of Space should be finished soon as well.” Ning felt a sense of pressure, because infusing the Dao of Space had been noticeably more difficult. He had long ago reached

Hegemony in the Dao of Space, but infusing it was extremely difficult. As for the Dao of Time and the Dao of Karma, those would be even more difficult and would definitely require more time.

“Great Immortal, please save my grandson!”

“Great Immortal, I beg of you, save my grandson! So long as you save him, I’ll do anything you want.”

A faint sound could be heard coming from afar. Ning frowned, glancing past the material obstruction of the mountain to see an elderly white-haired man who was on his knees in front of a cliff.

There were no cultivators in the entire Greatland Planet, and so Ning didn’t see the need to set up any complicated wards to surround his training canyon. He had merely set up something to prevent people from coming in.

“Is he that kid’s great-grandson?” When Ning saw the white-haired elder, he immediately remembered something from two hundred years ago. Back then, there had been a kid who had accidentally fallen down from the cliff and into the gorge where Ning had been training. Ning’s wards were quite benign, but for an ordinary child to fall from that height spelled almost certain doom. Ning had moved to save that little child, who had immediately kowtowed and offered thanks to the ‘Great Immortal’ who had rescued him.

Ever since the child had grown up, he had often come to the mountain to offer sacrifices and pay his respects to the ‘Great Immortal’. Ning really didn’t know whether to laugh or to cry, especially when the kid ended up bringing his own children and grandchildren to do the same!

Ning was able to immediately recognize this white-haired elder as the great-grandson of the original child.

“Ordinary mortals only live for a mere century. Multiple generations of your family have knelt down towards me... and today, I just so happened to finish some of my training. I suppose it can be said that there are karmic ties between us.” Ning took a single step forwards and appeared at the top of the cliff.

The white-haired elder was still on his knees, calling out for mercy. Suddenly, he froze and stared in amazement as a white-robed youth appeared in front of him. The youth was ephemerally graceful and was clearly no ordinary mortal.

“Great Immortal!” The white-haired elder was incredibly excited. “I beg of you, save my grandson!”

“Kid, your hair’s gone all white.” Ning chuckled. “Your grandson, eh? Is that him over there?” Ning was able to see the karmic ties swirling around the elder and was thus immediately able to locate his grandson.

Ning waved a single finger, causing the white mist surrounding the cliff to suddenly condense into an image of a swarthy, muscular youth dressed in tattered clothes within a mine. He was carrying a load of minerals on his back; clearly, he had been working as a miner. The area around him was surrounded with ore, and an overseer was next to him with a whip in hand.

“That’s Rocky! That’s my grandson Rocky!” the white-haired elder said excitedly. “That’s the Mine of Doom! No one who goes in there ever survives to come back. Great Immortal, please save my grandson!”

“No one who goes in can survive?” Ning stared at the images in the mist, then chuckled: “You underestimate your grandson.”

Ning was able to see the youth’s future. If Ning didn’t interfere, the youth would slowly rise to power within the mines and become a powerful expert. He would be extremely hard-working and devoted to his training, and would reach the apex of what little ‘cultivation’ was possible within this planet. In the end, he would die a lonely death.

Although it was impossible for the beings in this planet to engage in true cultivation, there were many who were born with natural power over the earth and who would thus be capable of some simple cultivation techniques... but even at the apex of power, they wouldn’t be even close to the Earth Immortal level of power.

“I daresay your grandson has the unyielding heart of a true cultivator,” Ning chuckled. “A pity that it’ll all go to waste in a place like the

Greatland Planet.”

As Ning continued to view the youth’s past and future, he began to take a liking to the kid. In fact, Ning started to consider taking him on as an apprentice... and just a short while later, Ning settled on making the kid his eighth apprentice.

“But there’s no rush. I should let him experience some more difficulties in life first. In the future, his Dao-heart only became decent after he became lonely in his invincibility,” Ning mused.

“Go back and live your life. Don’t worry, I promise your grandson will come back alive and perfectly well. You’ll be able to see him one last time roughly ten years from now,” Ning said. The beings in this world were at most able to live a bit over a hundred years. Ning wasn’t going to make any alterations, but the old man was still going to live a long life.

“Y-y-yes, Great Immortal!” After witnessing the incredible abilities of the ‘Great Immortal’ and hearing his promise, the white-haired elder became hopeful and energetic. He returned to his own home and began to wait for his grandson to return.

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Ning began to watch from afar as this ‘disciple’ continued to grow and develop. Finally, the day came.

“I’ve wandered the four corners of the earth and have visited many countries, defeating all who sought to challenge me. Is this truly it?” A swarthy man dressed in hemp clothes was standing at the peak of a mountain, staring at the vast world below him. He had a thick saber on his back, and a look of loneliness was in his eyes.

After becoming truly invincible, he felt a sense of extremely uncomfortable loneliness. He truly did wish to find a good opponent, but he had been unable to do so.

“Perhaps I should find a good place to bring my life to an end.” The swarthy man shook his head.

“Haha...” A loud laugh rang out, followed by a white-robed youth

appearing from nowhere.

The swarthy man stared in shock. Given his control over the earth and his current level of power, how was it that someone could appear next to him without him even noticing?

“You...” The swarthy man stared at the white-robed youth. He suddenly thought of a painting his grandfather had once owned and forced him to kowtow towards. Supposedly, the person in the painting was the legendary ‘Great Immortal’ their clan often spoke of.

“Great Immortal?” the swarthy man said hesitantly, not quite believing it. He then drew his saber with a clanging sound as he stared at Ning:

“Senior, you might be more powerful than me... but I’d still like you to give me a few pointers in combat.” After speaking, he delivered a furious saber-chop towards Ning, confident that his control over the saber was enough to ensure that he could bring it to an instant halt without harming the person in front of him.

Ning simply chuckled.

The swarthy man suddenly flew backwards, almost as though time had just gone backwards. Even his saber flew back into his sheath, and he even said in reverse: “Em naht lufrewop erom eb thgim uoy...”

This bizarre scene caused him to be truly stupefied and dazed.

“Are you willing to be my apprentice?” Ning asked.

The swarthy man was indescribably excited. He immediately fell to his knees: “Stonepool kowtows to you, Master.”

Ning nodded. “From this day forth, you shall be the eighth disciple under the tutelage of myself, ‘Darknorth’. If there are any affairs in the mortal world you wish to wrap up, hurry up and take care of it. After doing so, you shall accompany me in departing from this planet... and you shall have the chance to face the true world of cultivation.”

And so, Daolord Darknoth’s eighth disciple, ‘Stonepool’, formally entered his tutelage.

“It is time for me to leave.” Ning raised his head to stare into the skies. He had the vague feeling that something just happened, and that he would no longer be able to continue this relaxed life.

# Credits

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